

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN®

ISSUE

97

CLONE SAGA: PART 1



BENDIS
BAGLEY
DELL
SIBAL

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PREVIOUSLY IN ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN...

The bite of a genetically-altered spider granted high school student Peter Parker incredible, arachnid-like powers! When a burglar killed his beloved Uncle Ben, a grief-stricken Peter vowed to use his amazing abilities to protect his fellow man. He learned the invaluable lesson that with great power must also come great responsibility...

Now the fledgling super hero tries to balance a full high school curriculum, a night job as a web designer for the Daily Bugle tabloid, a friendship with the beautiful Mary Jane Watson, and swing-time as the misunderstood, web-slinging Spider-Man.

Having recently broken up with Mary Jane, Peter started seeing Kitty Pryde, member of the super-powered mutant team, the X-Men. Kitty—whose identity as the super hero Shadowcat is known to the world—tried to create as normal a relationship as circumstances would allow. Unfortunately, a televised team-up romantically linked Shadowcat and Spider-Man, meaning that, without revealing Peter's secret identity, Kitty couldn't also be dating Peter.

Moreover, the relationship has—understandably—put a tremendous strain on Peter and MJ's friendship...



CLONE SAGA

Part 1

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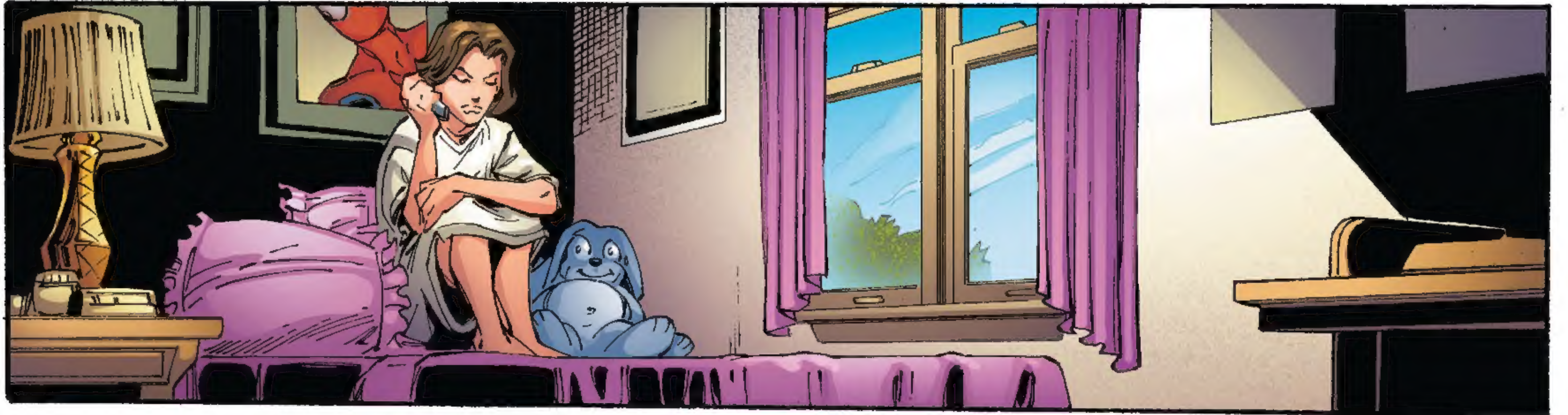
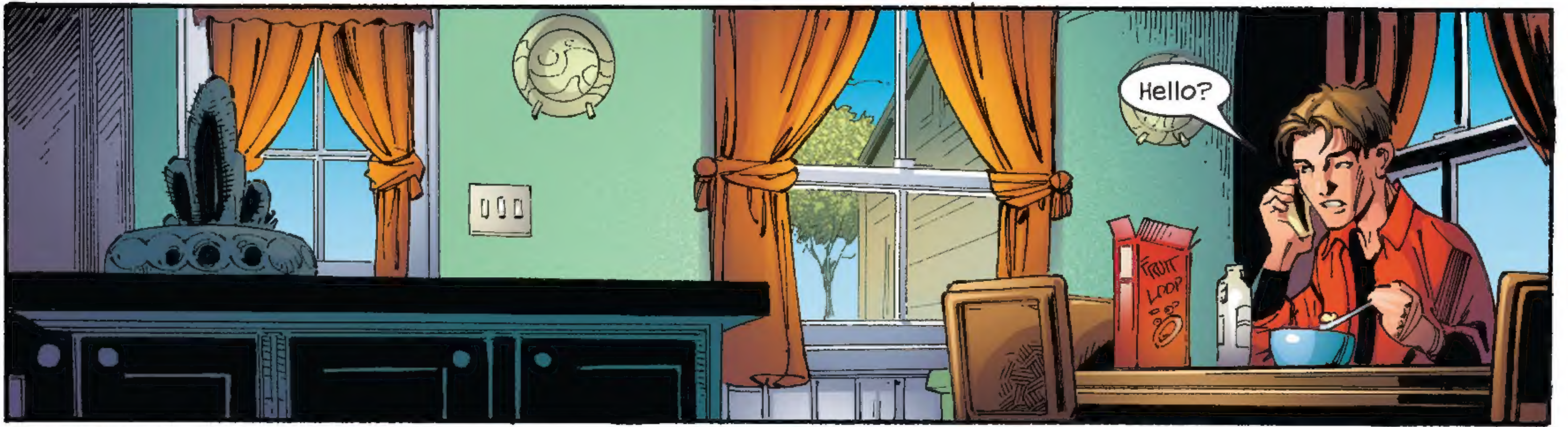
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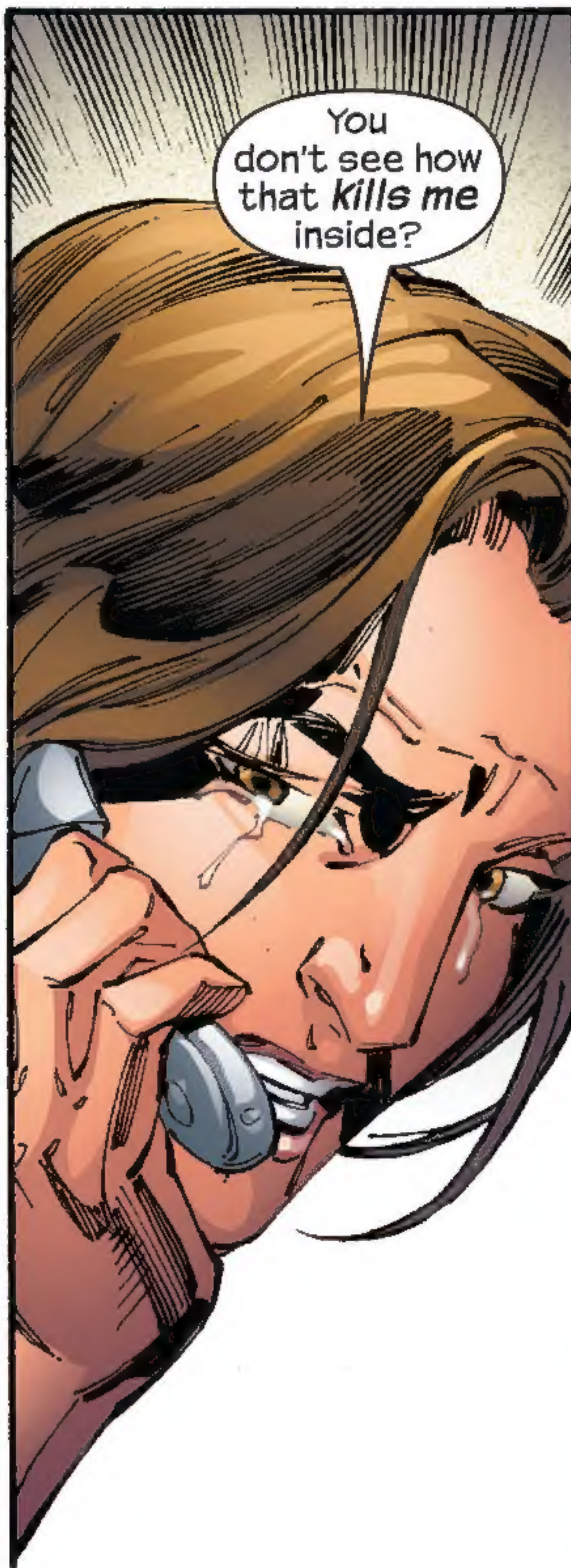
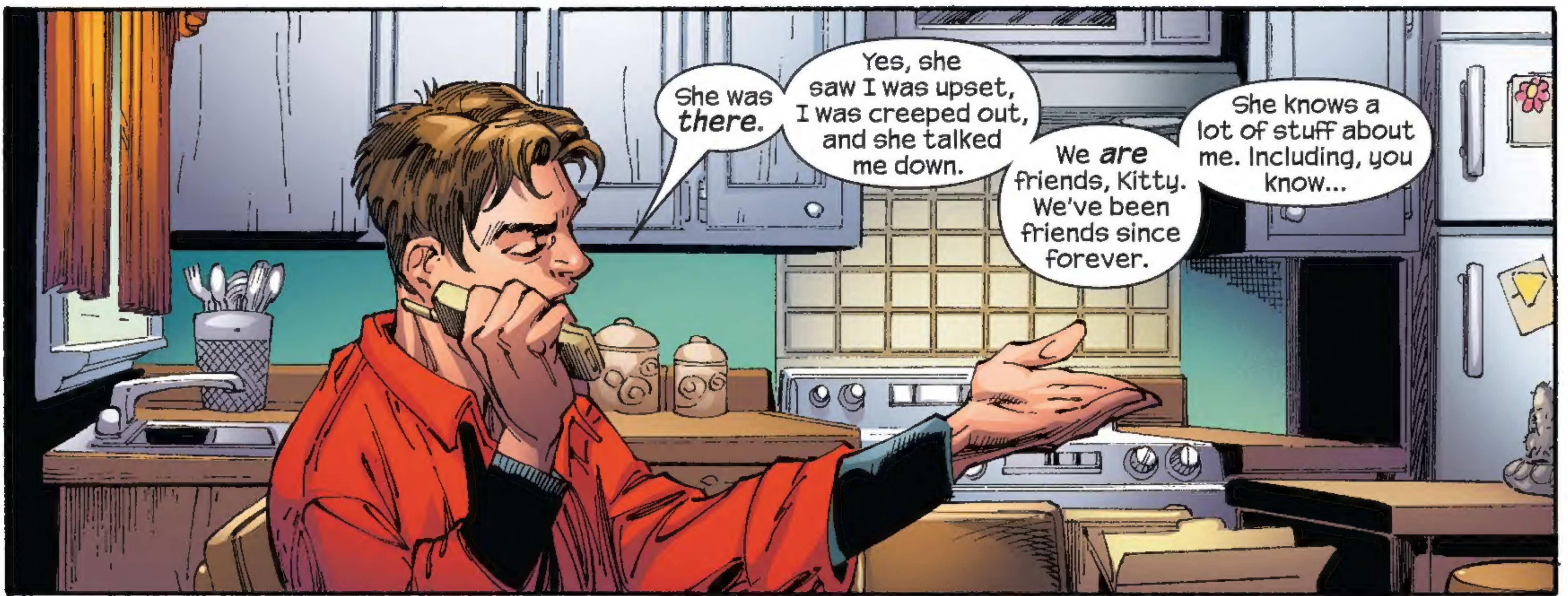
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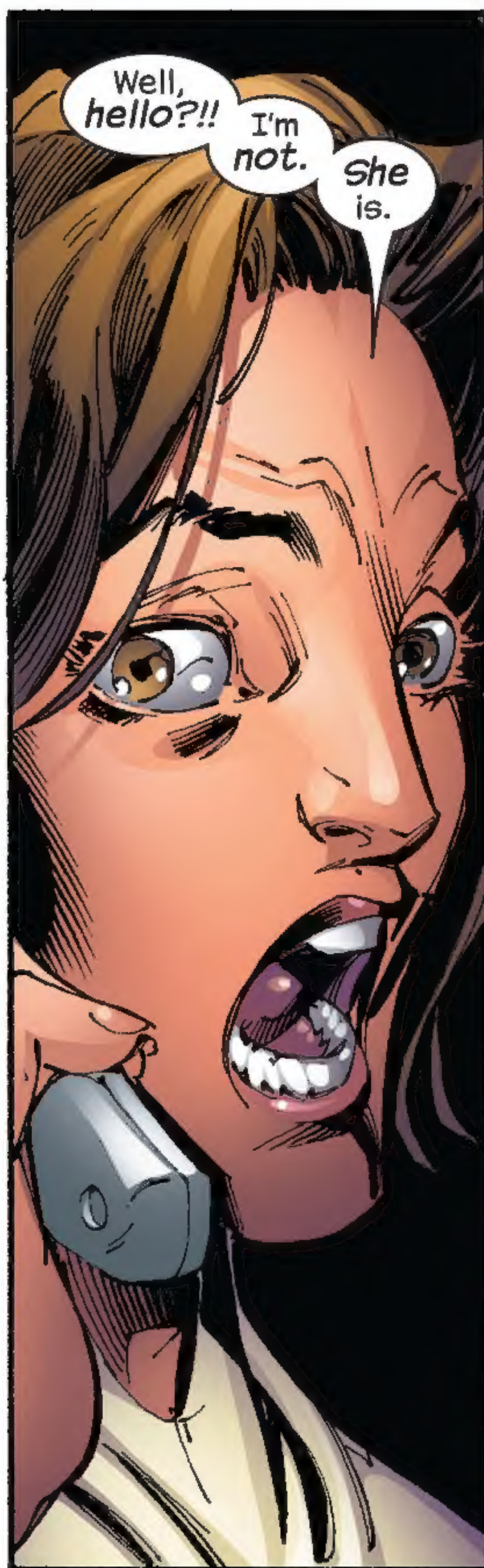




I should be the one you come to. I'm your girlfriend. I should be the one!



You are.



Well, hello?!!

I'm not.

She is.



I'm not the only person in the world you talk to.

You have all your friends in the X-Men.

Yeah, but--

I have **no** friends.

Zero friends.

And I have **no one** who knows about, you know, my other life but you and her.

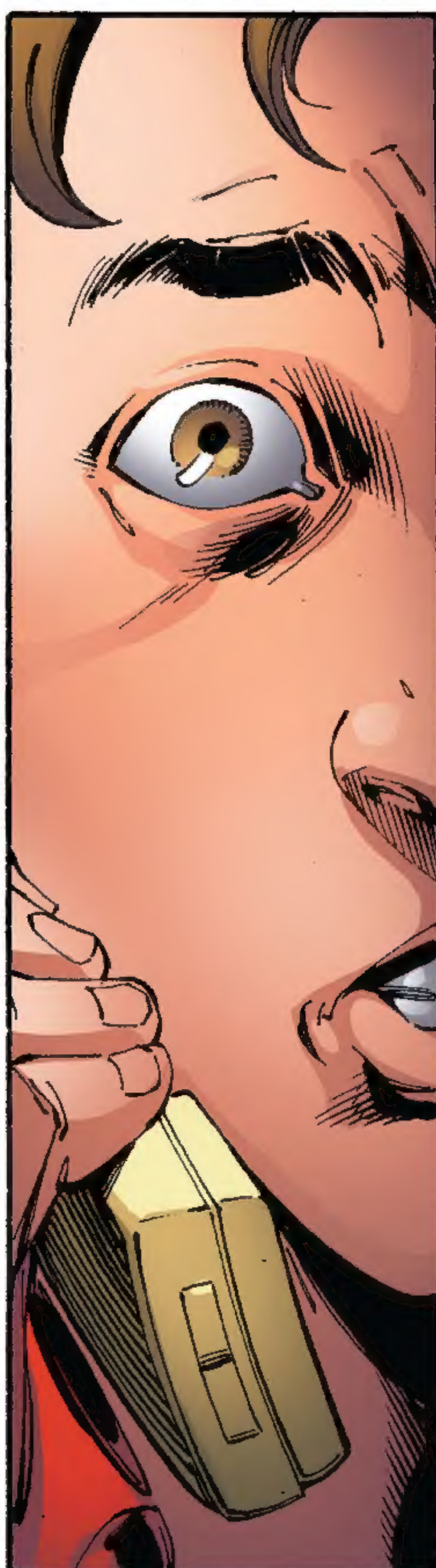
(And half the super villains in the tri-state area.)



It's different.

How is it different?

You're in love with her!!



Oh my God!

You didn't break up with her because you **hate** her, you broke up with her because you thought you had to-- to keep her from getting hurt!!!



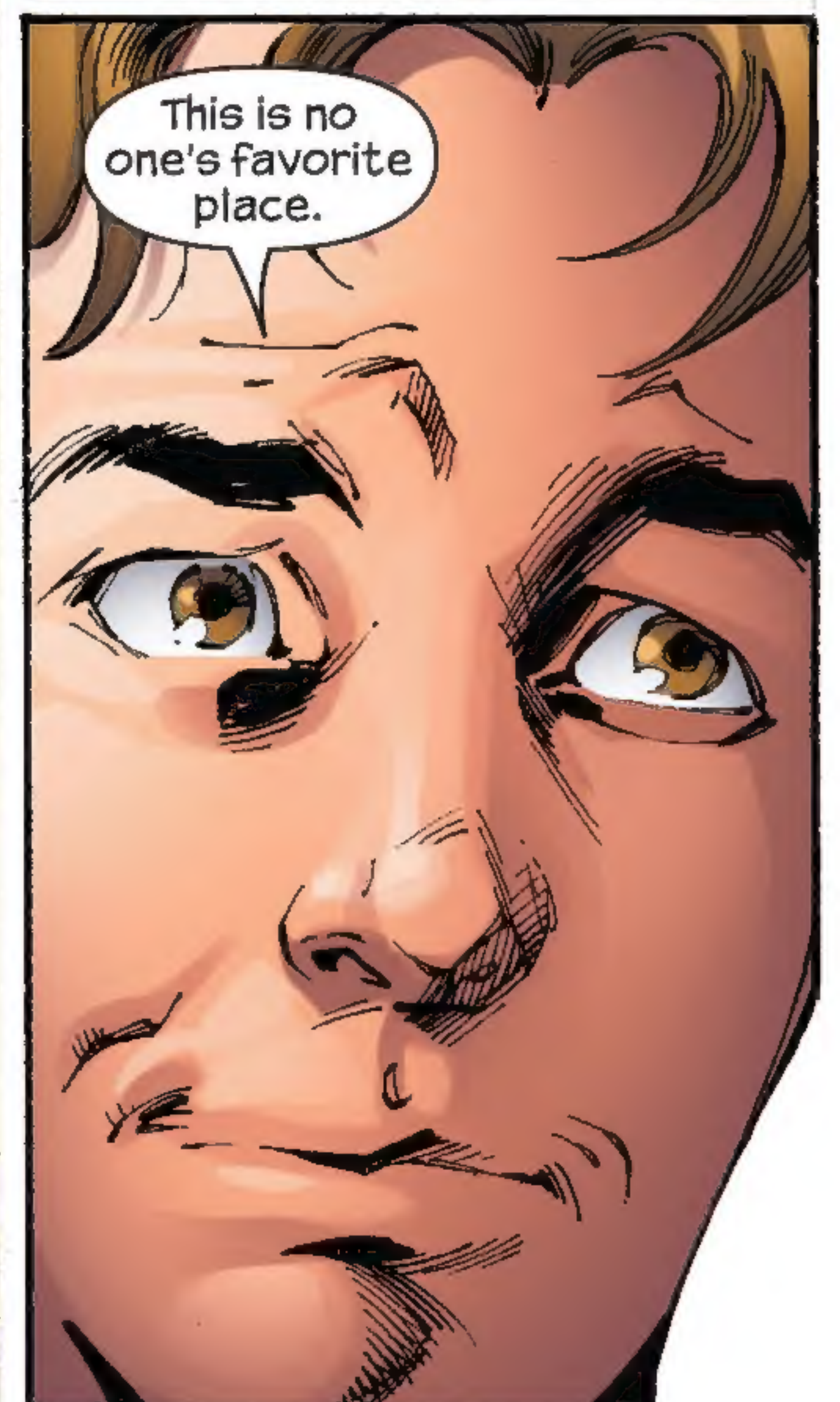
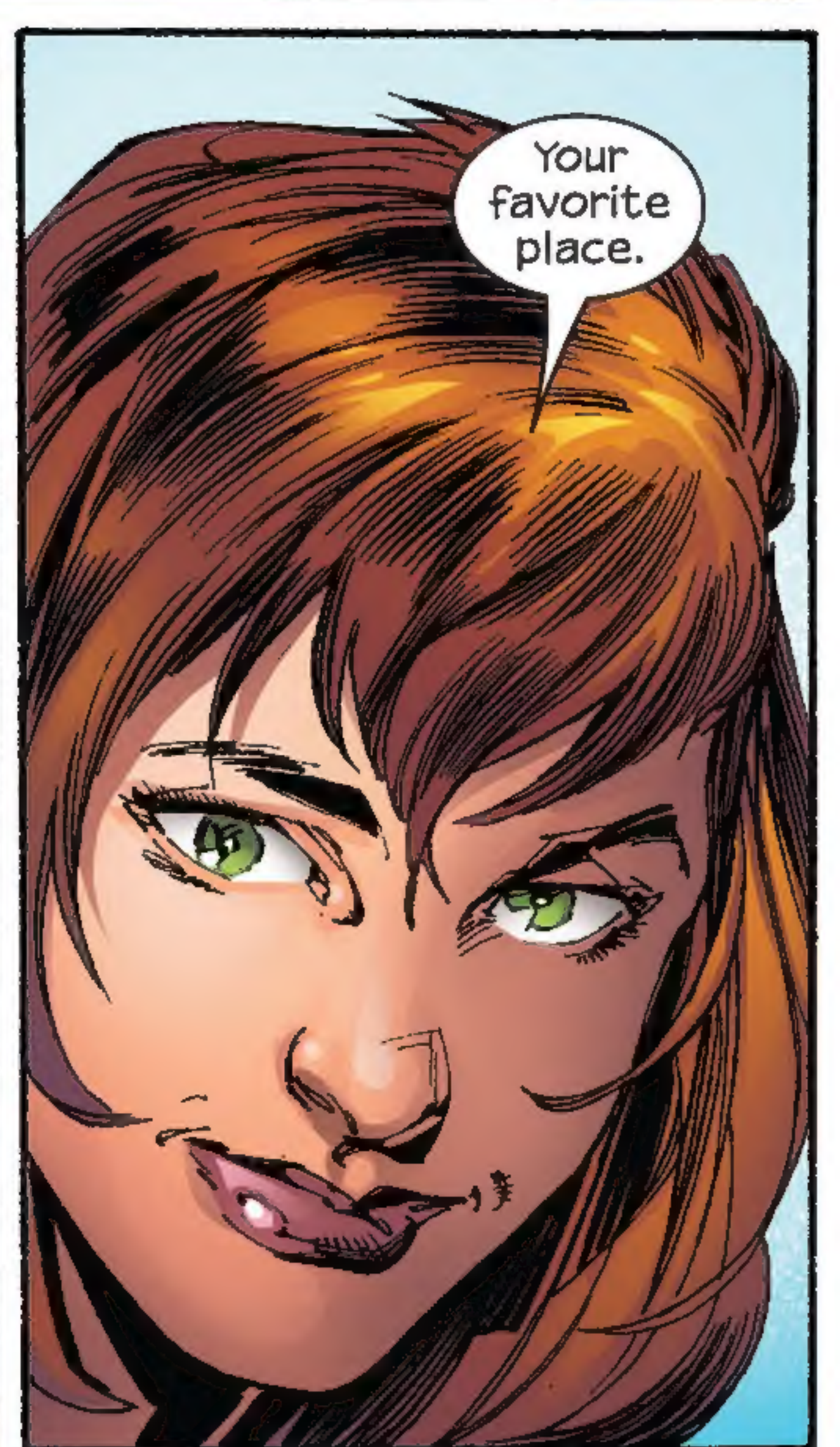
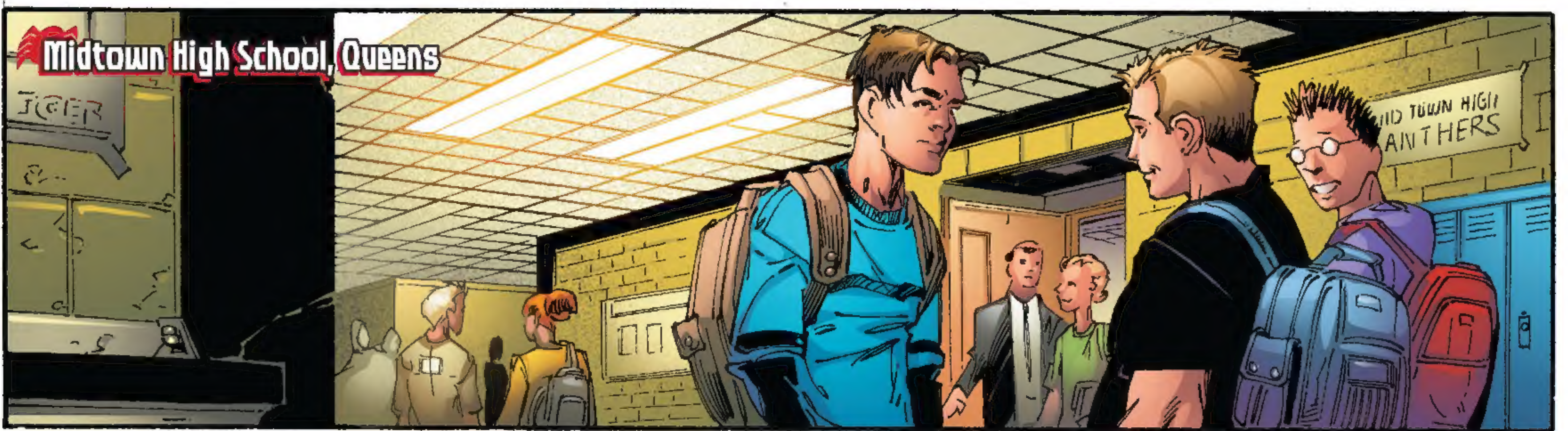
What do you want me to do? **Move?**

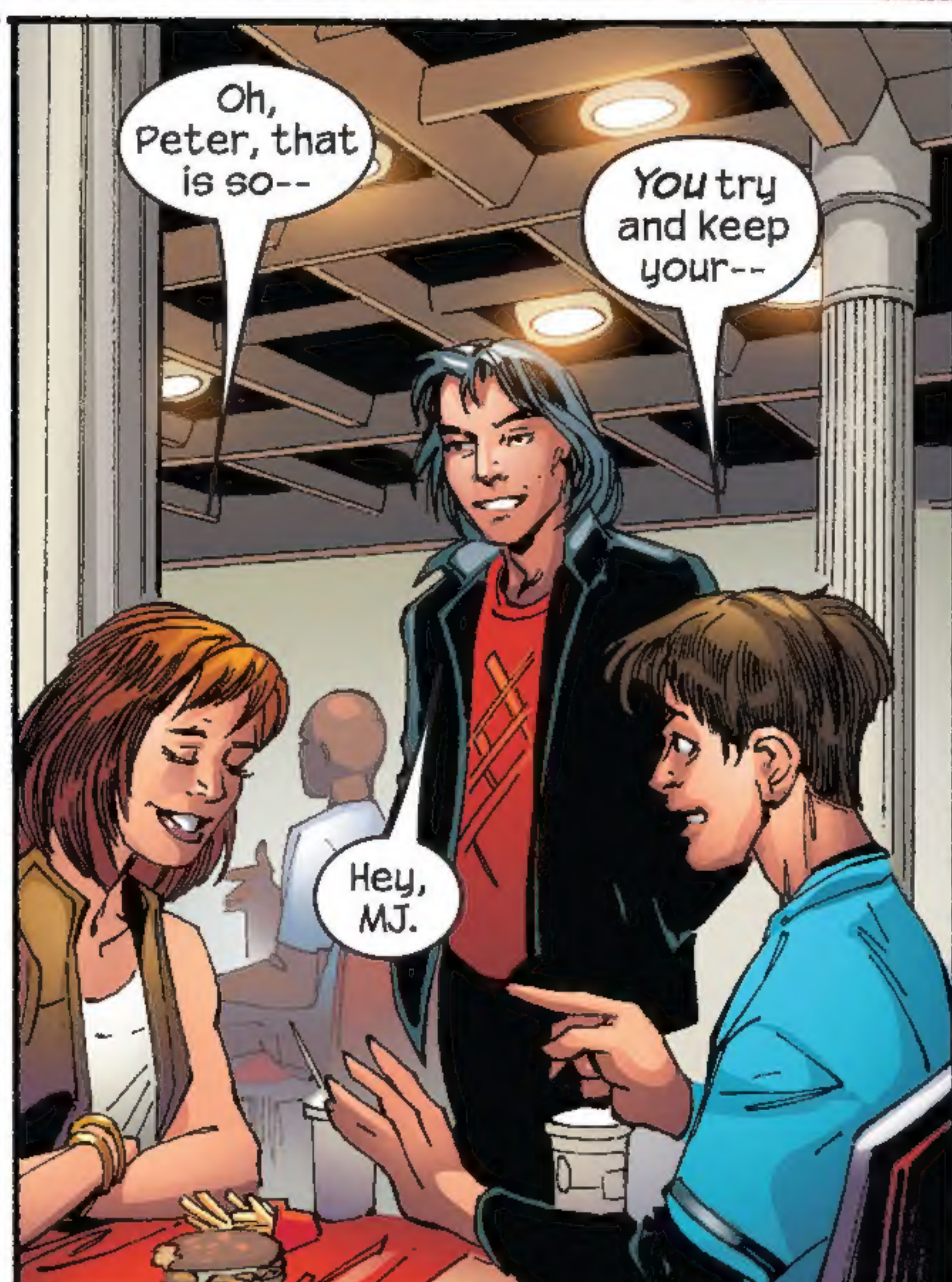
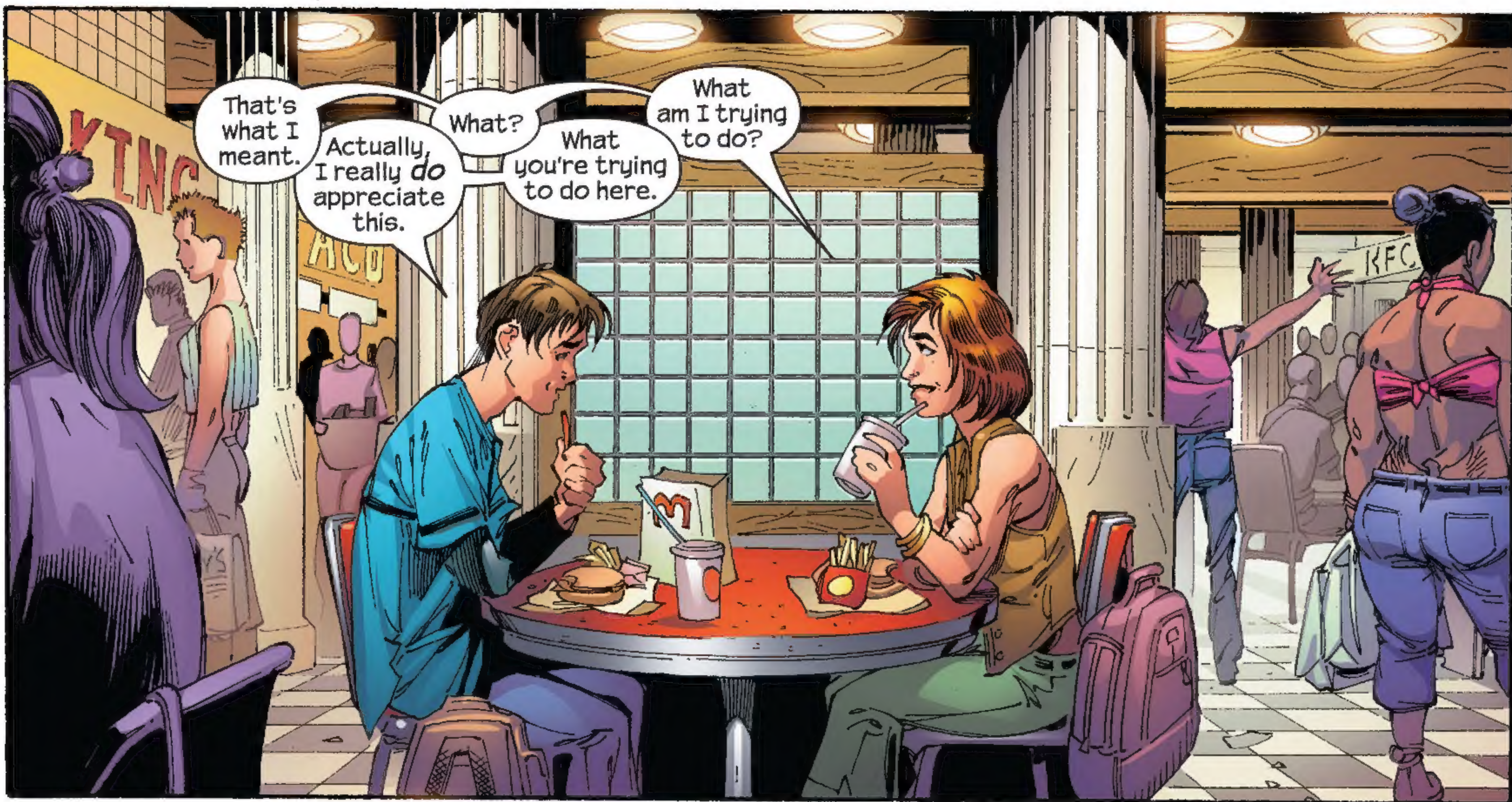
Hi honey, I'm home.

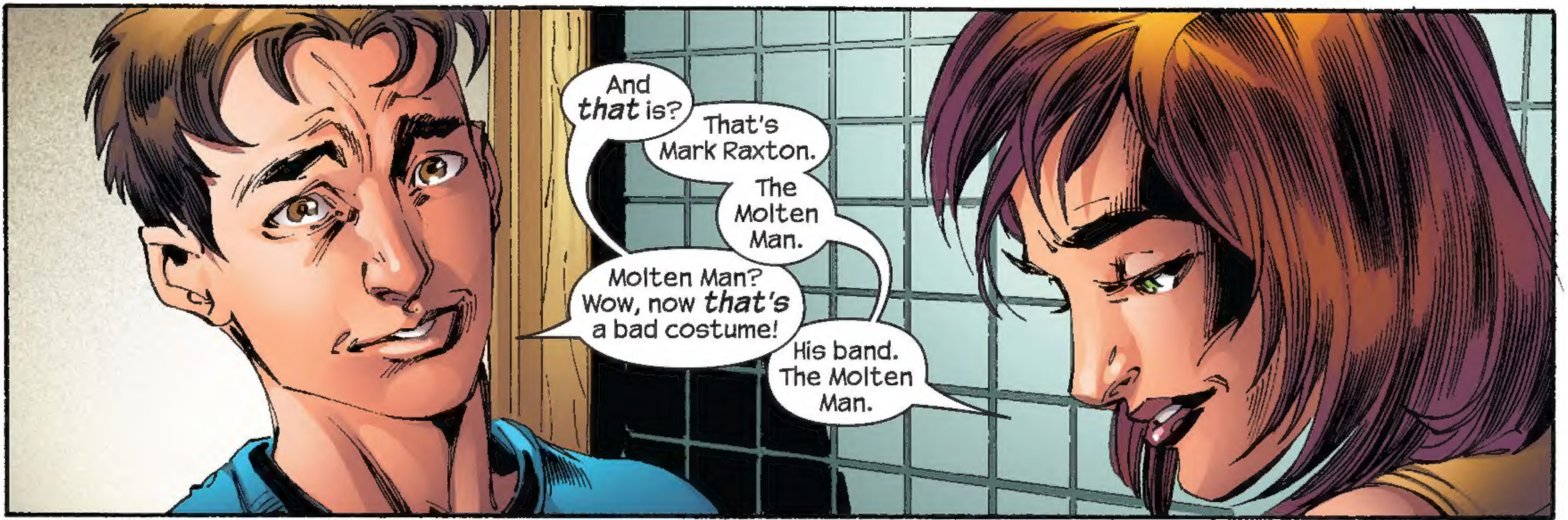
Is that her??

It's my Aunt May!





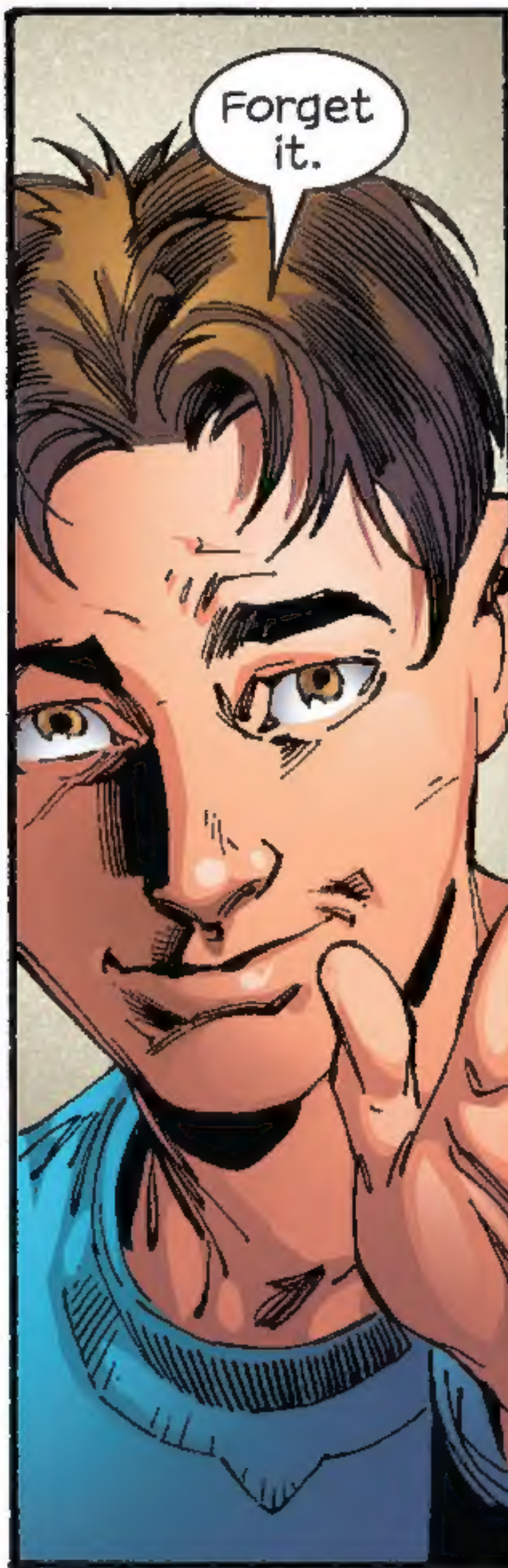




And that is?
That's Mark Raxton.
The Molten Man.
Molten Man? Wow, now *that's* a bad costume!
His band. The Molten Man.



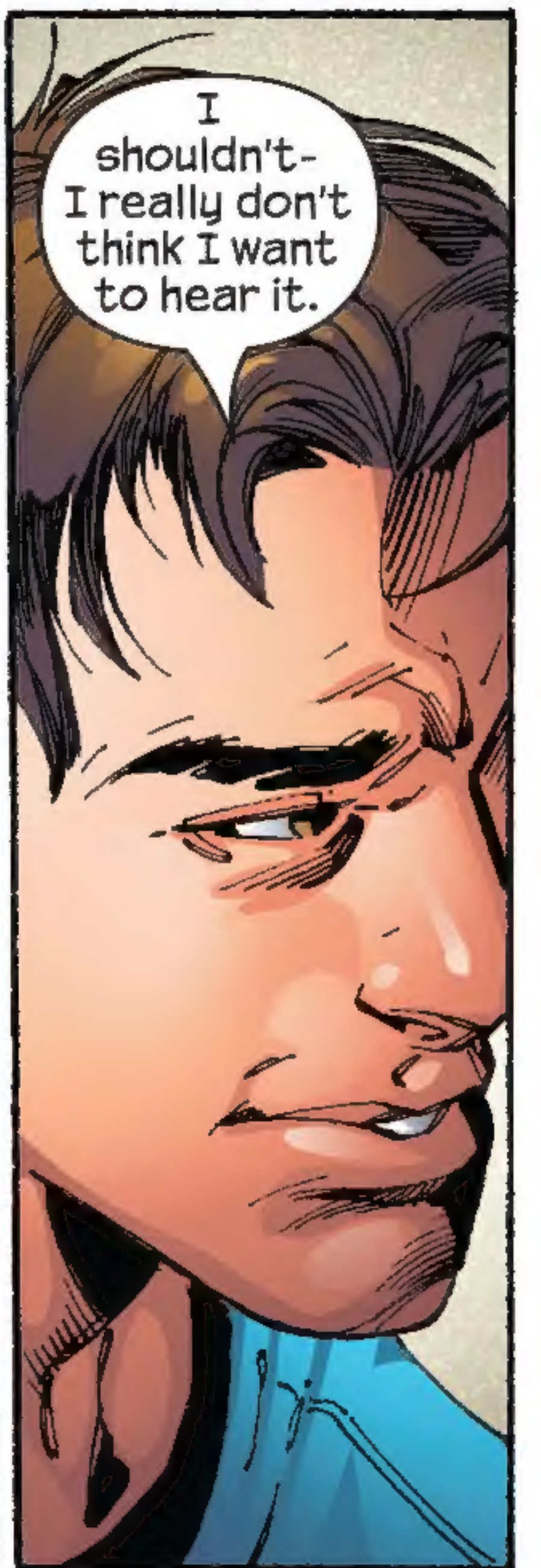
Something going on there?
We- well, we went out.
When?
What do you mean?



Forget it.



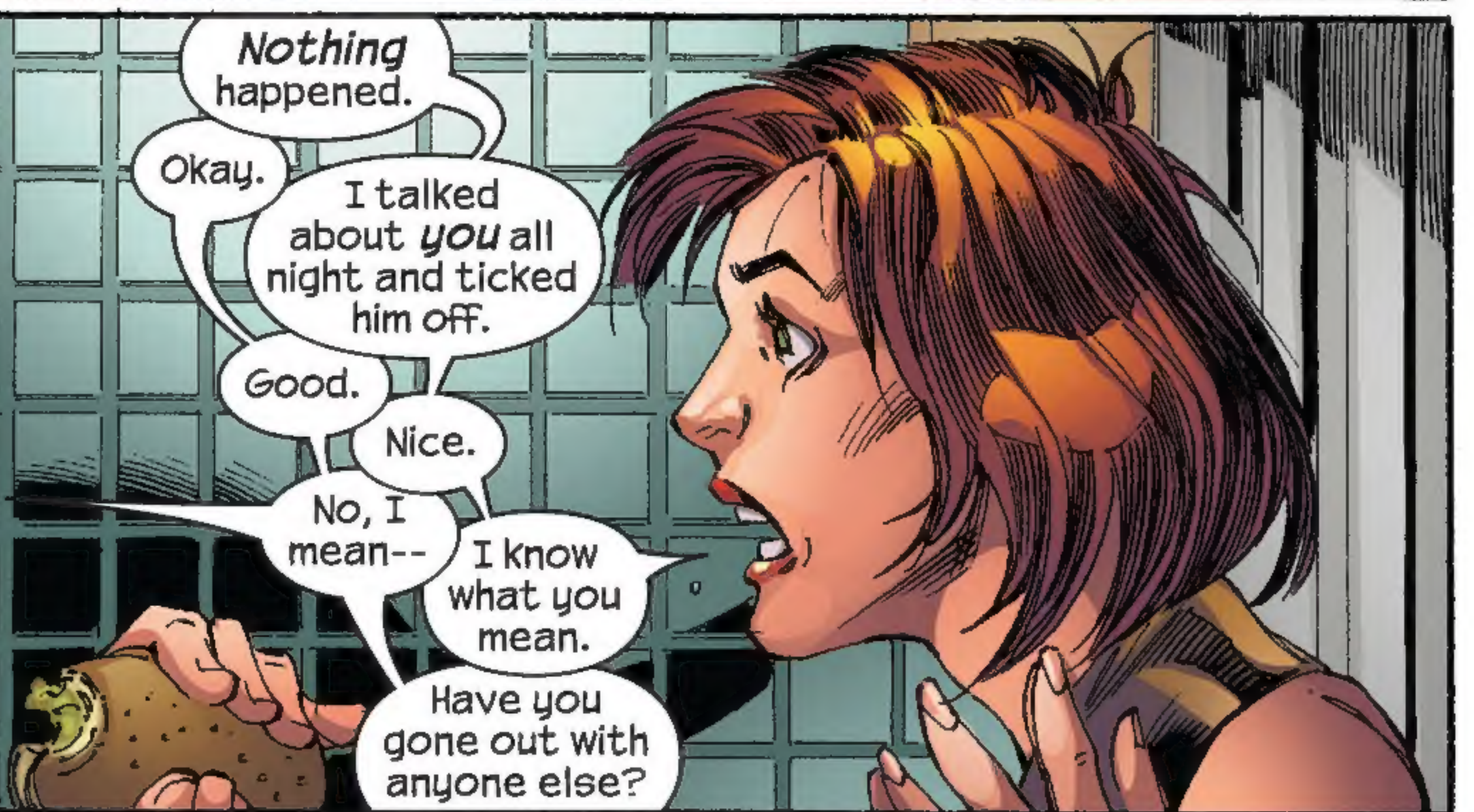
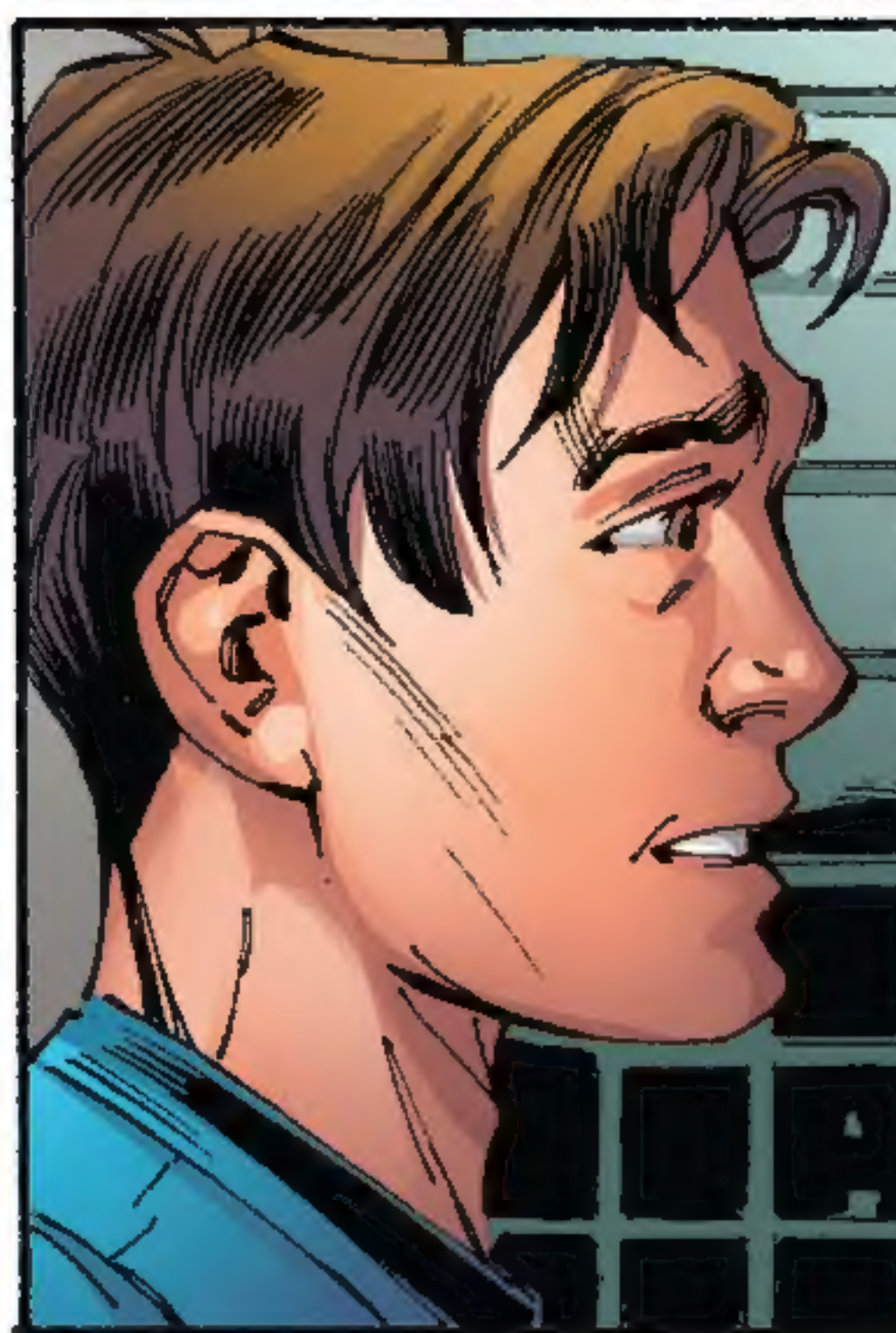
When we broke up.



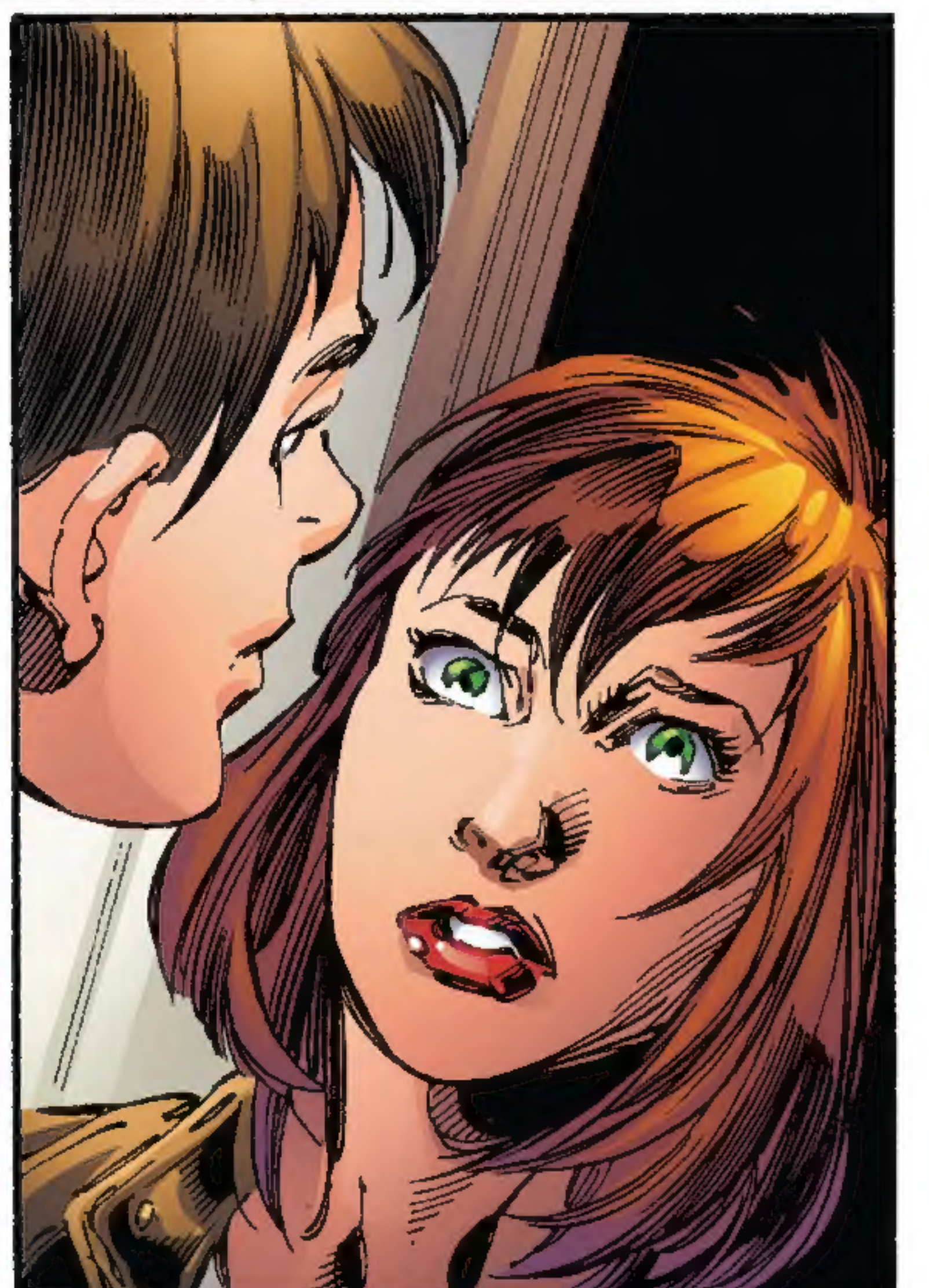
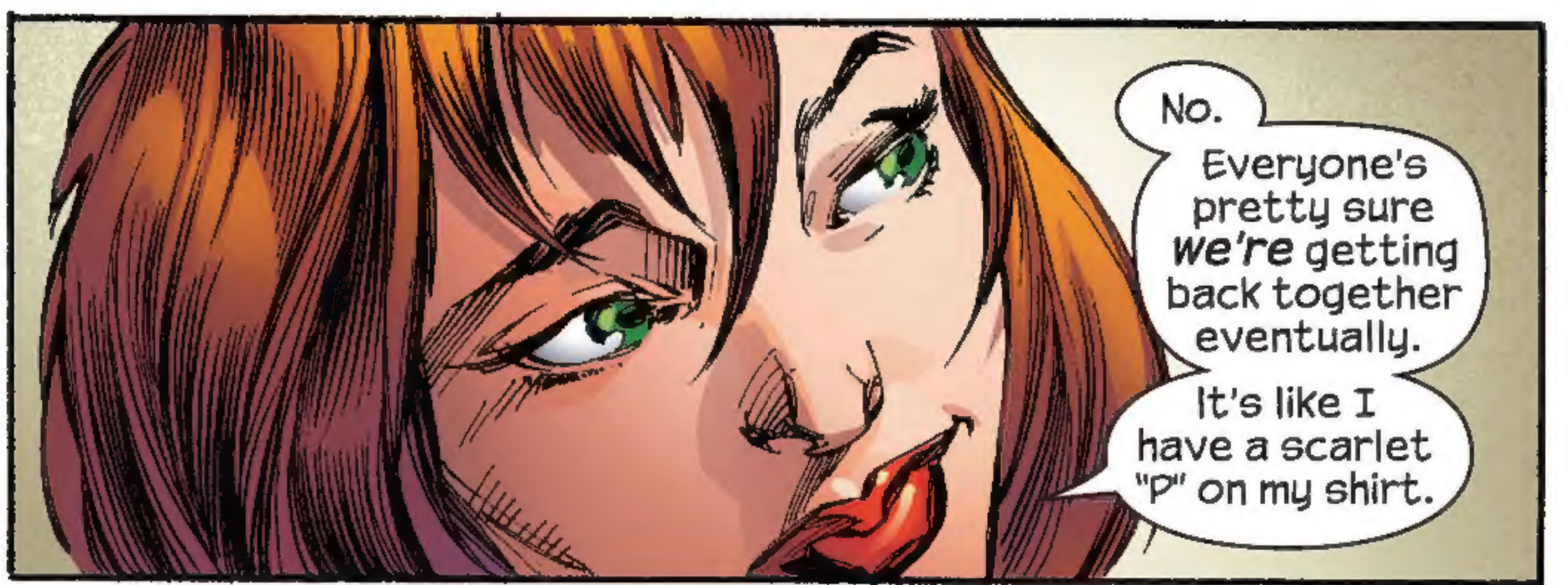
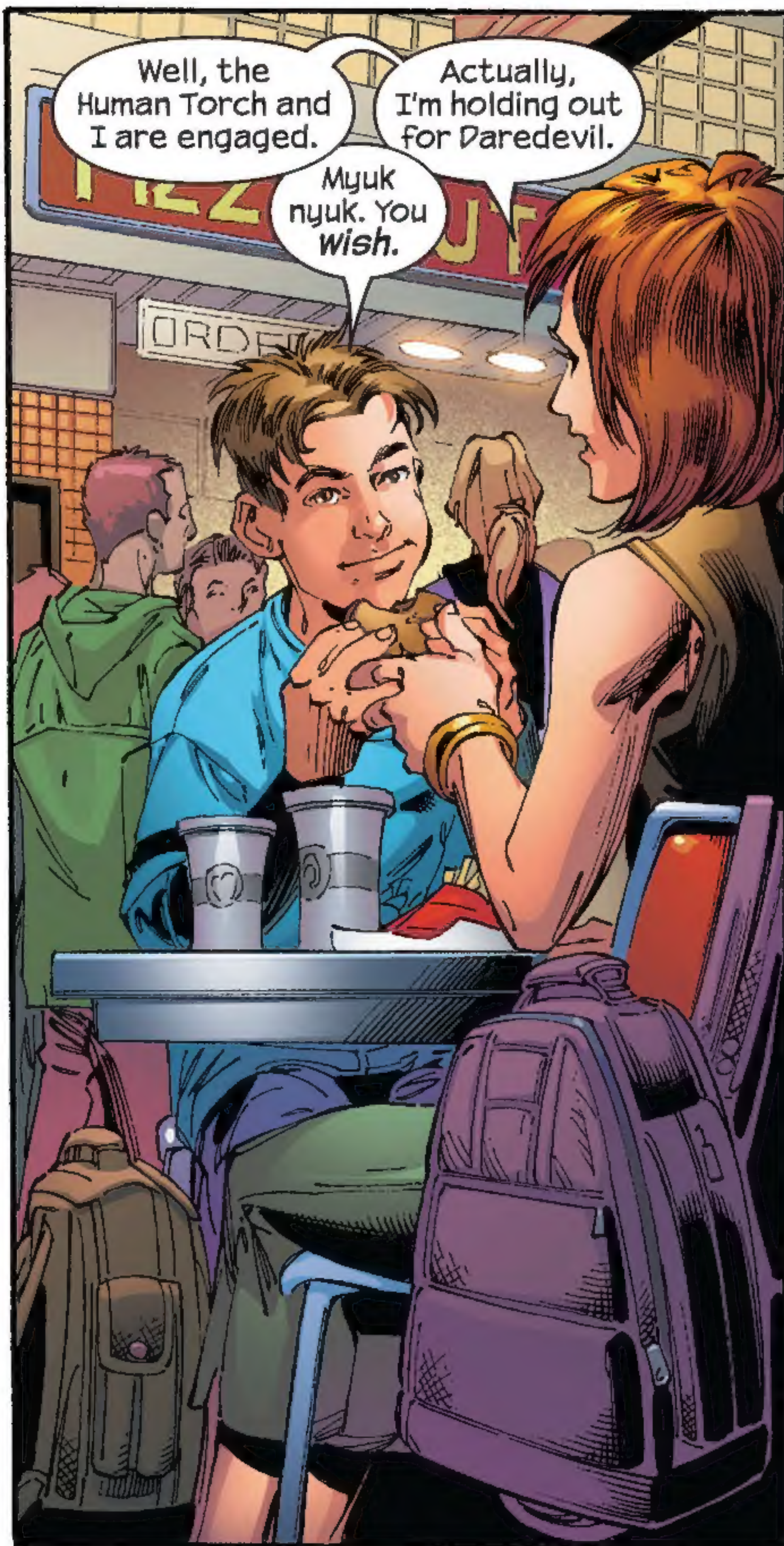
I shouldn't- I really don't think I want to hear it.

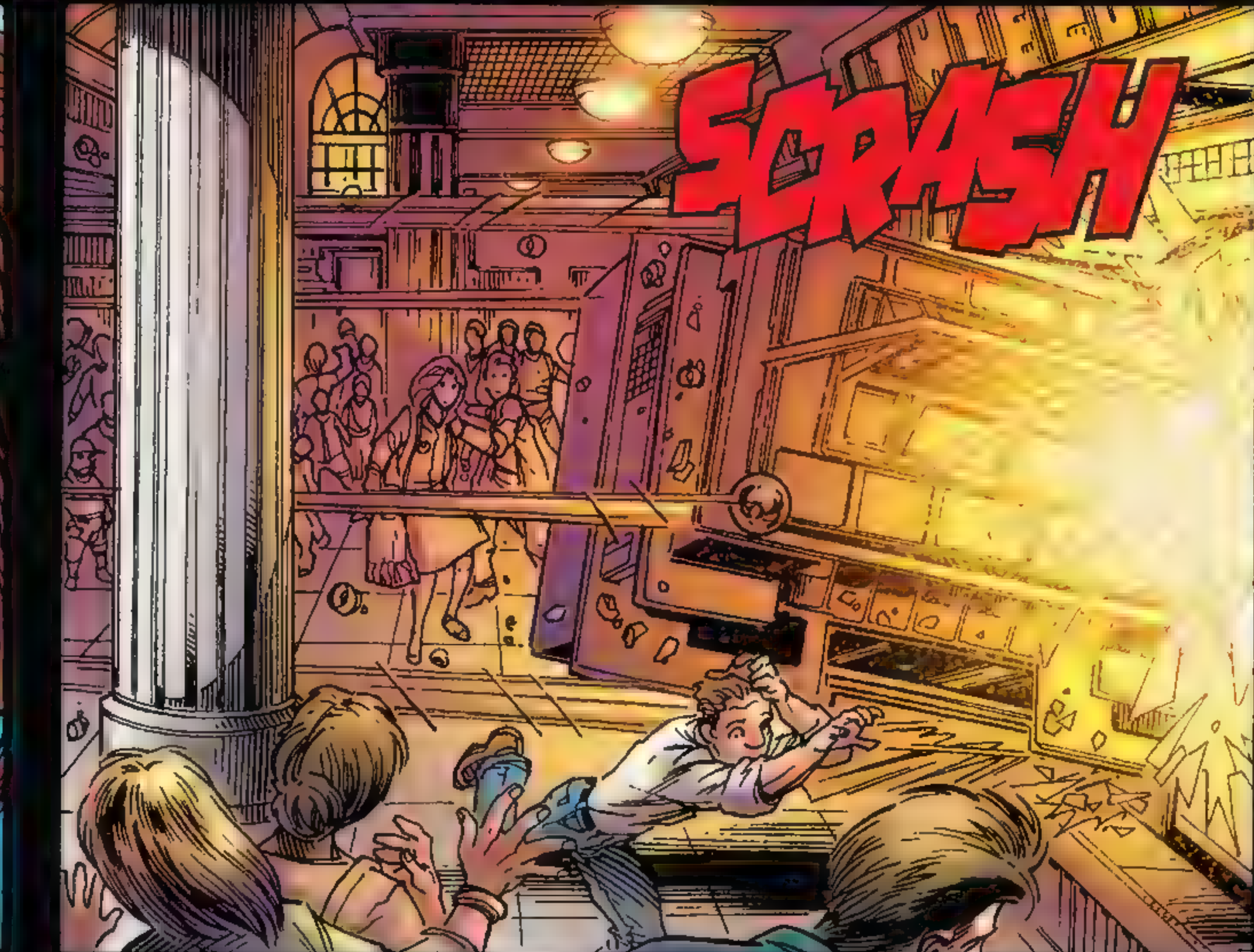
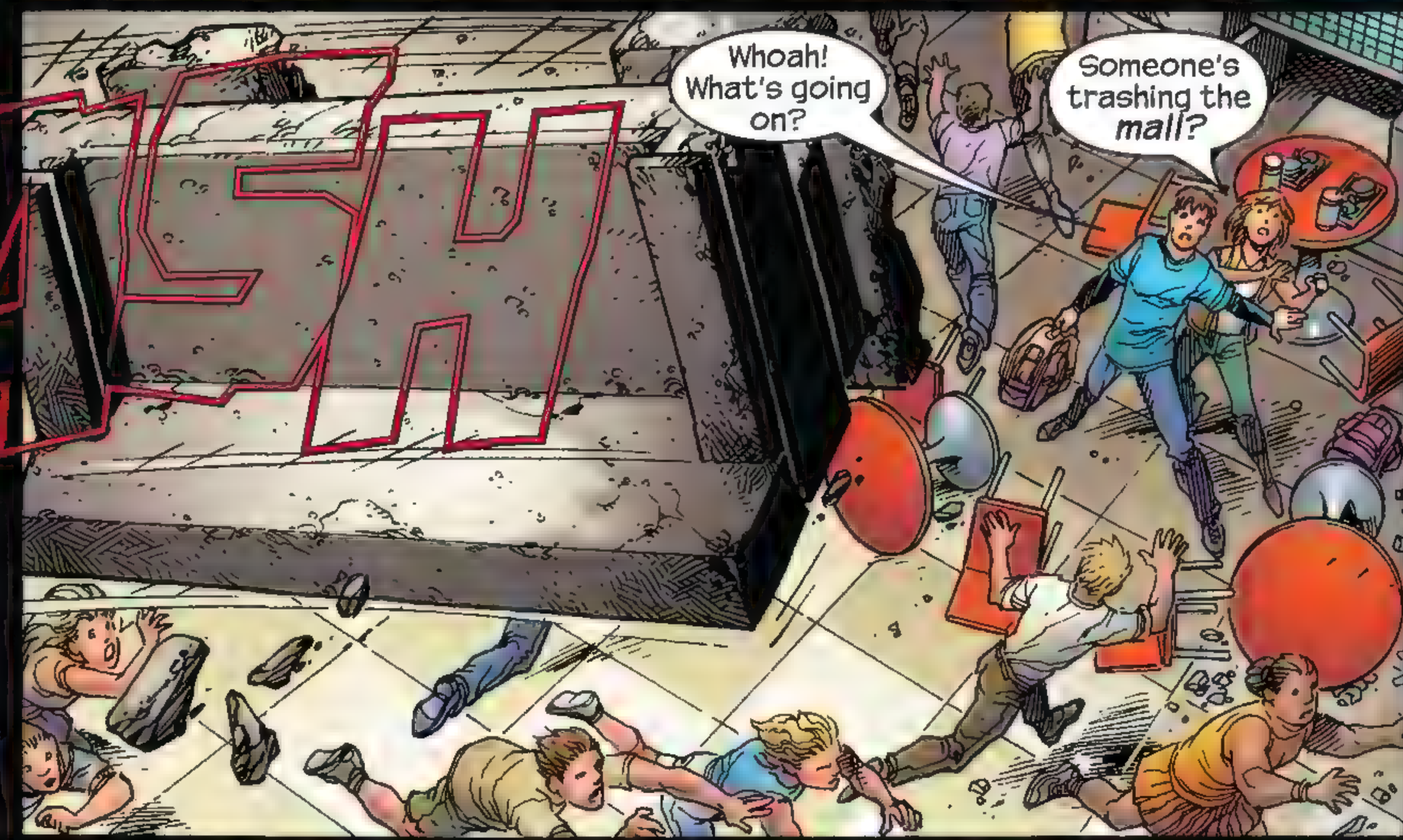
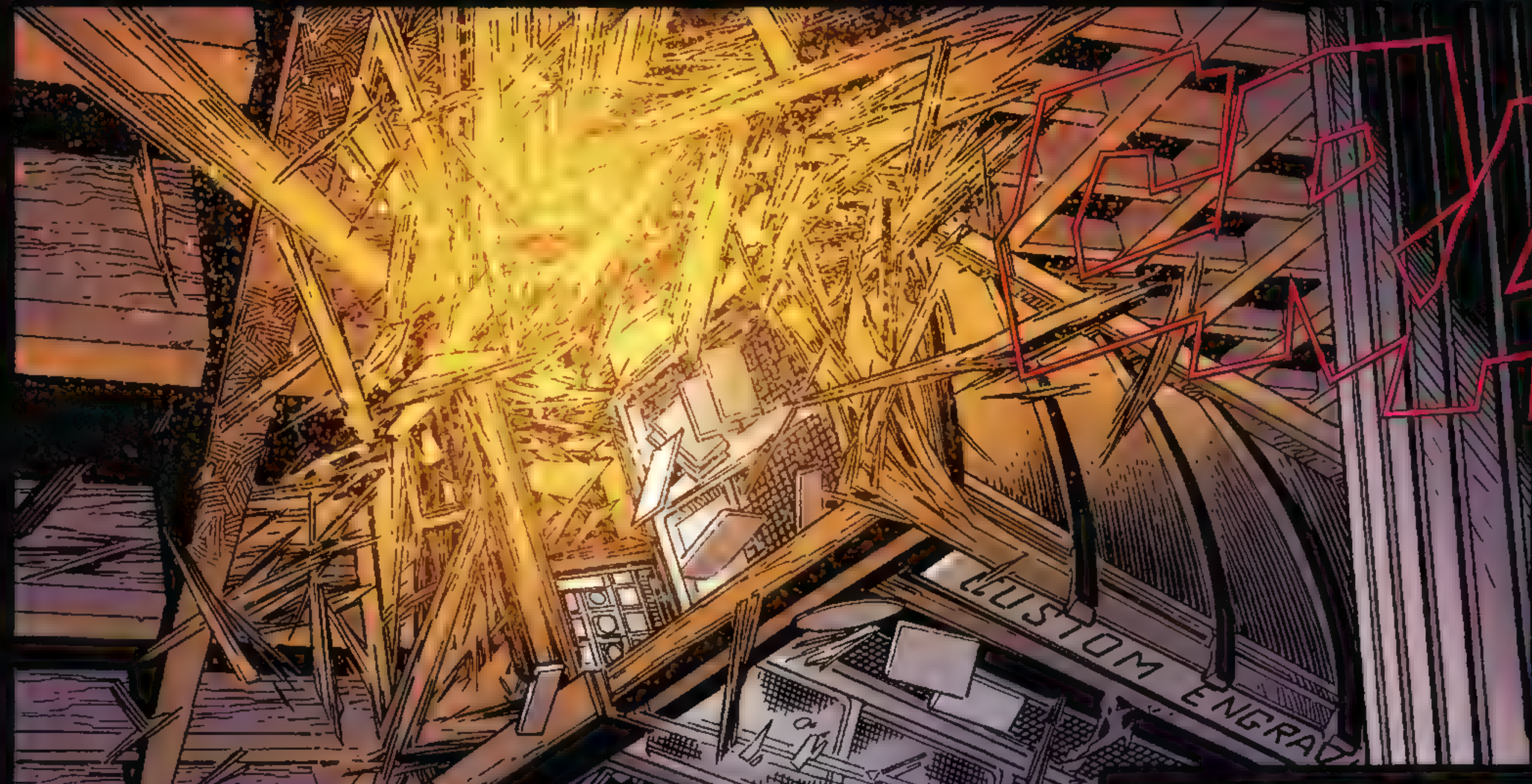


Yeah.

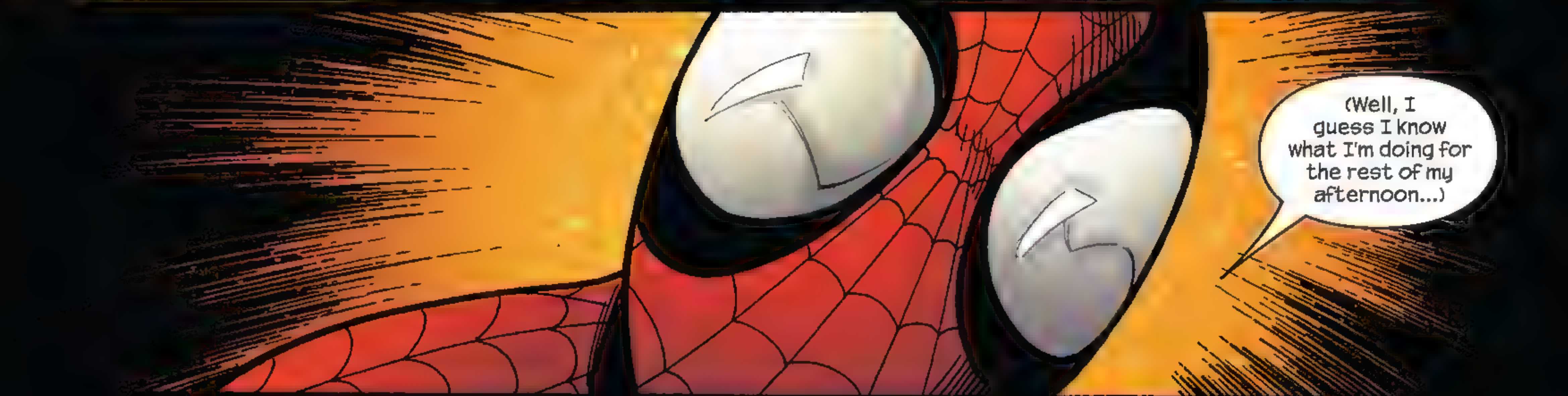


Nothing happened.
Okay.
I talked about *you* all night and ticked him off.
Good.
Nice.
No, I mean--
I know what you mean.
Have you gone out with anyone else?

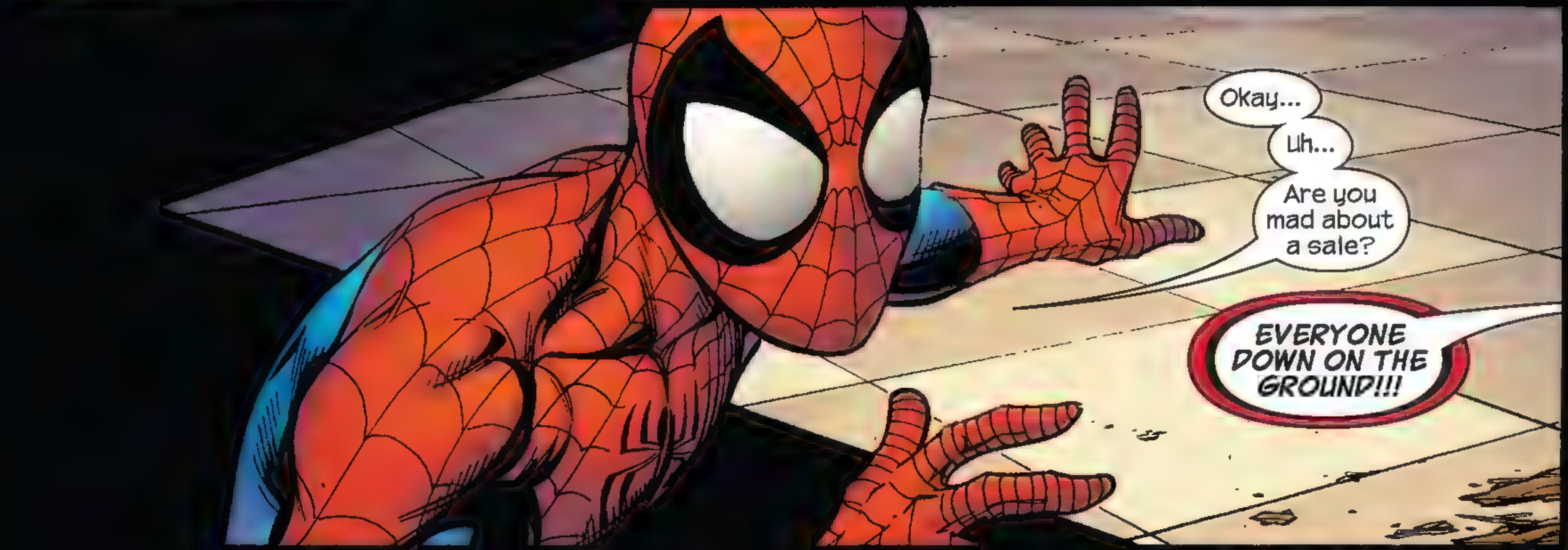
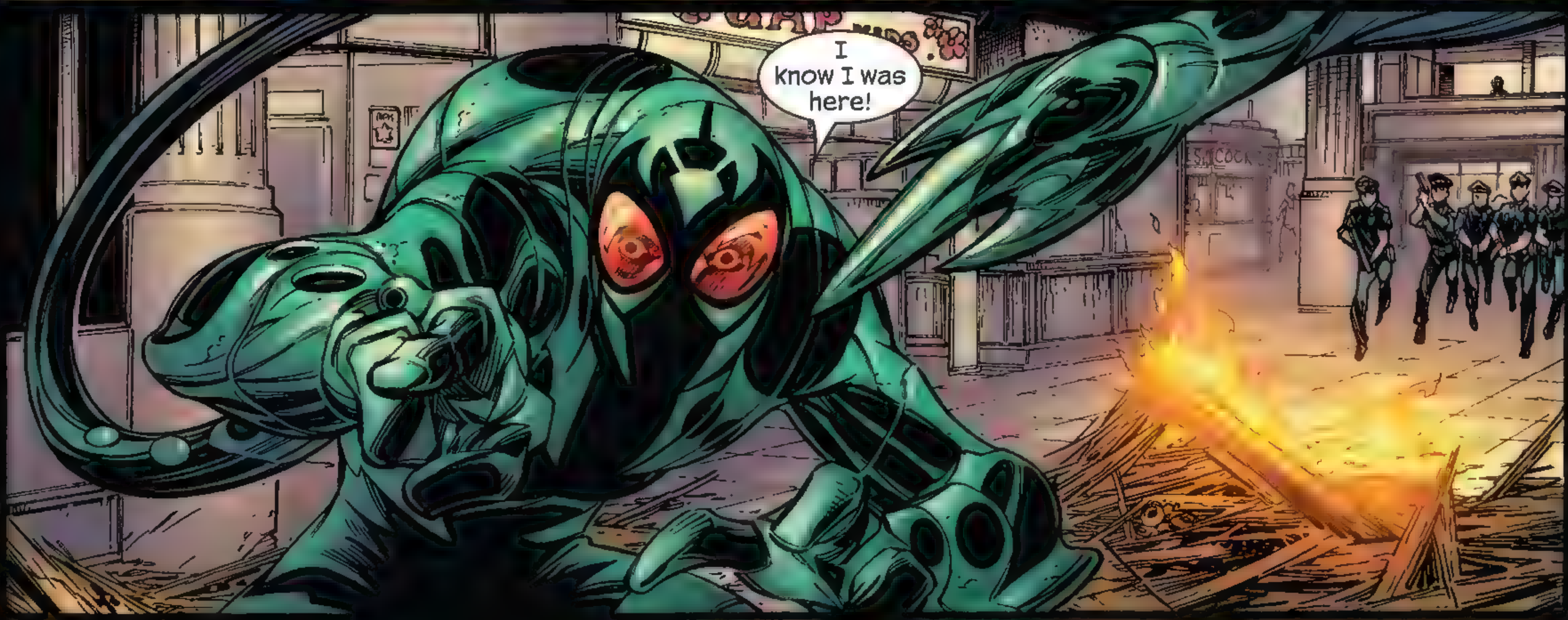
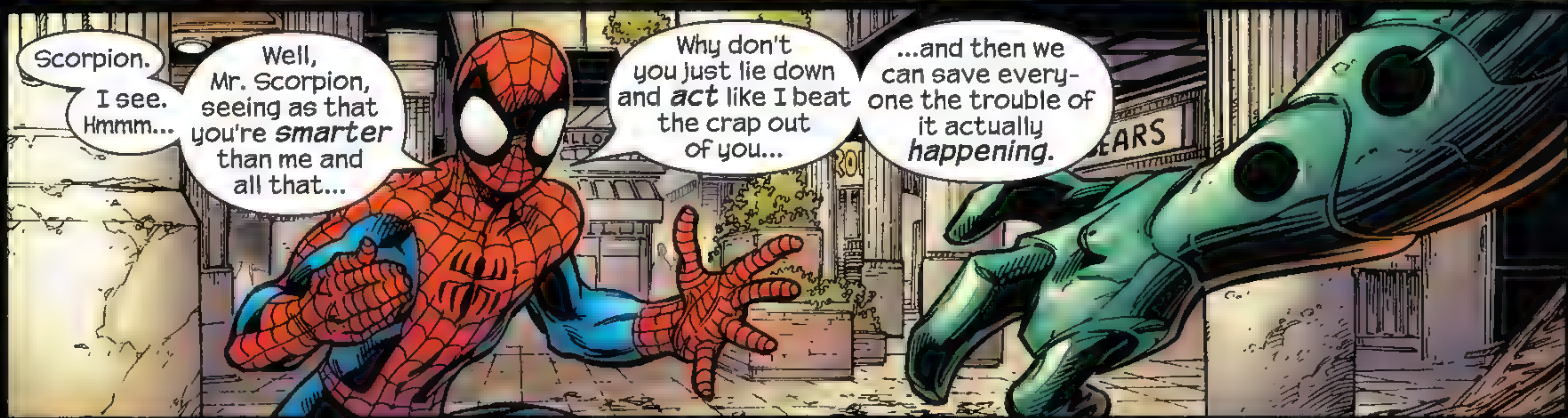
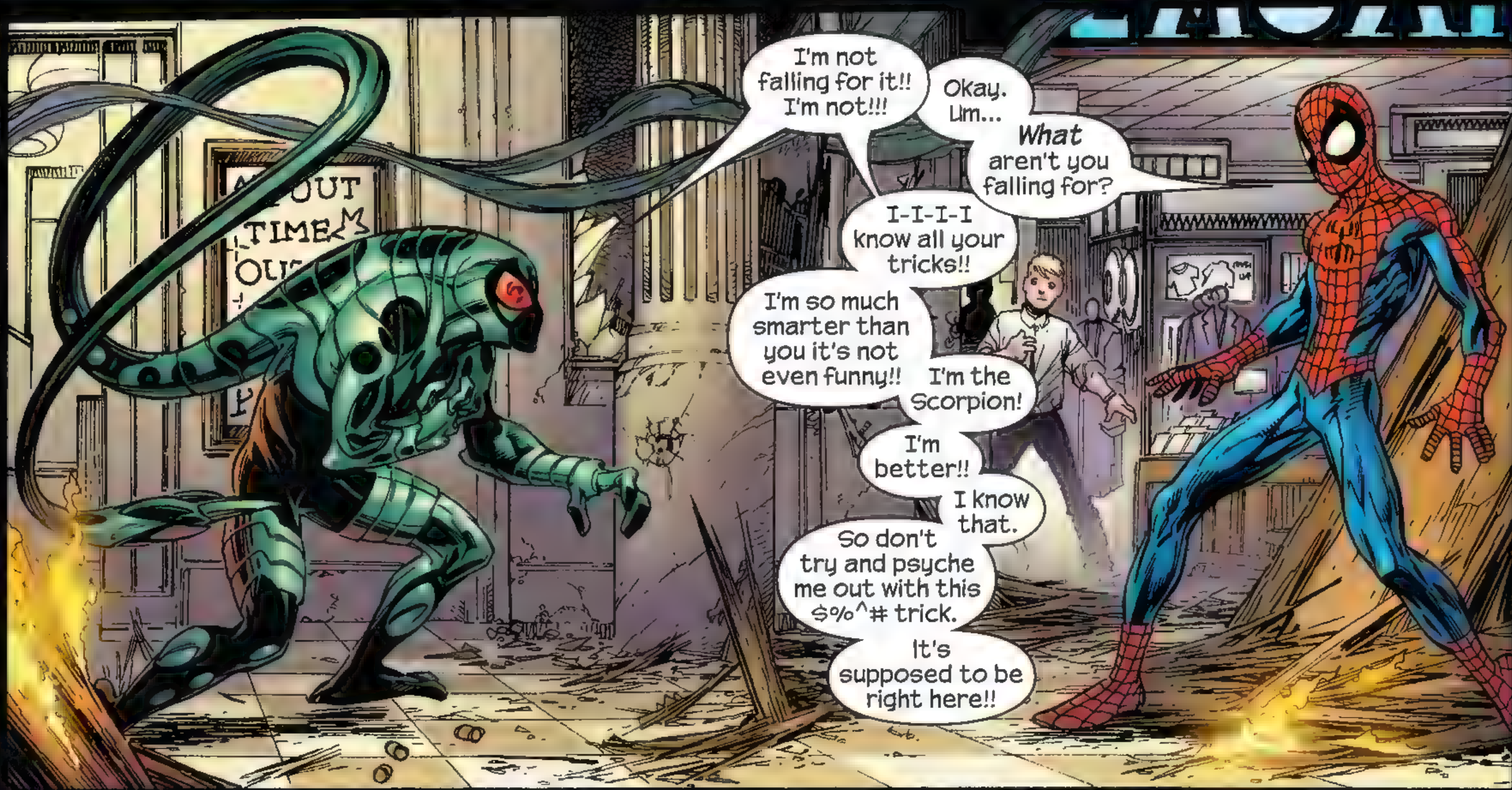


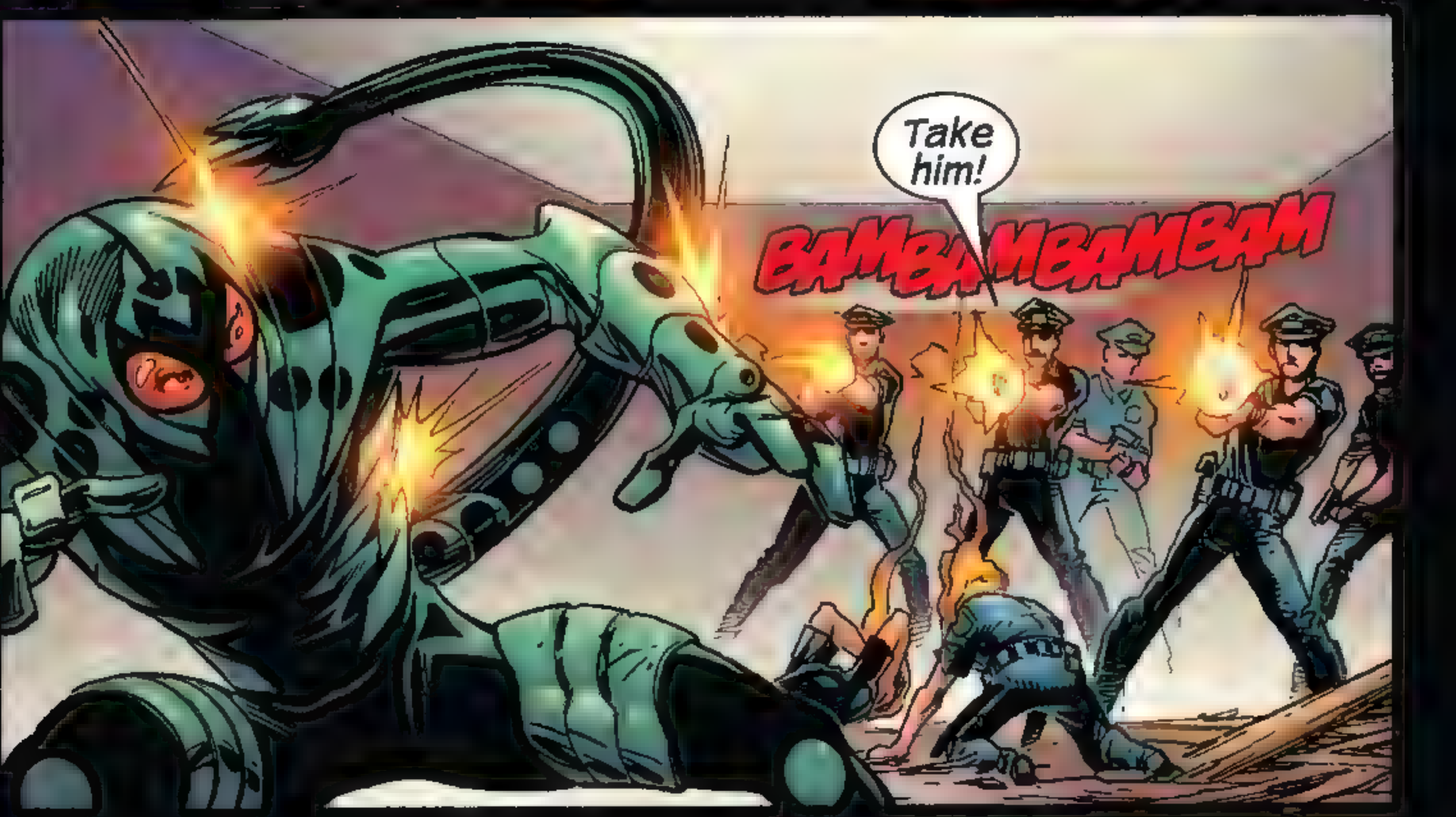
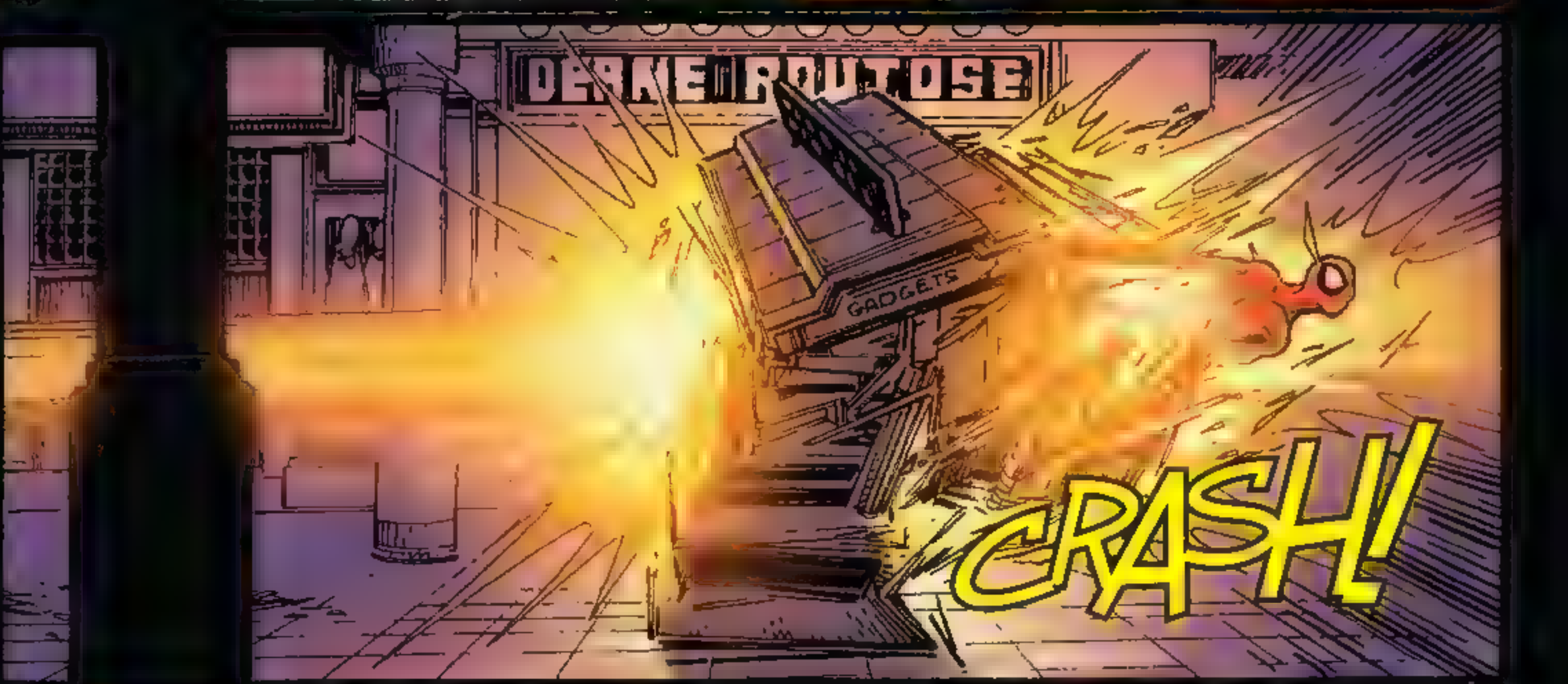
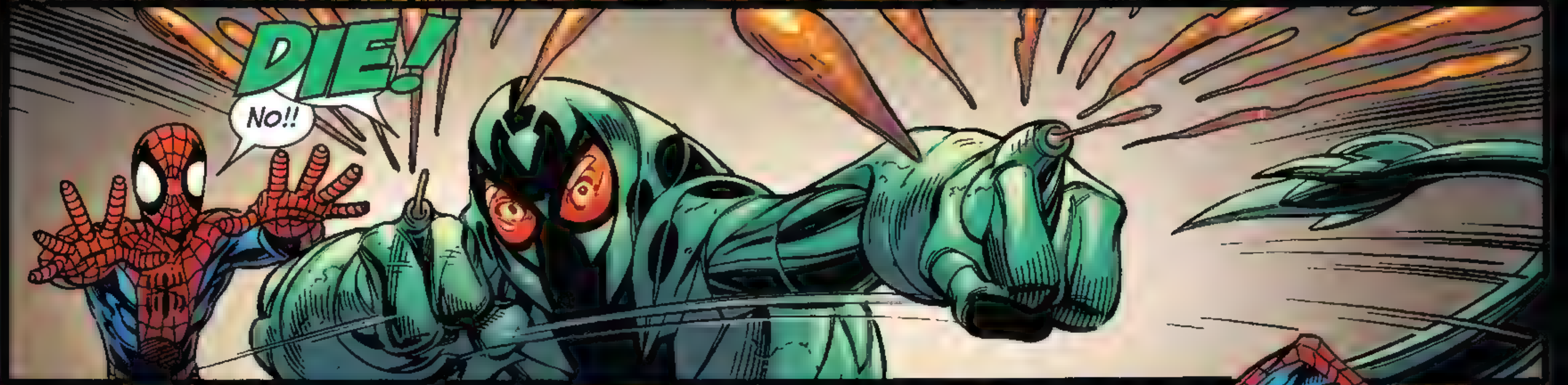


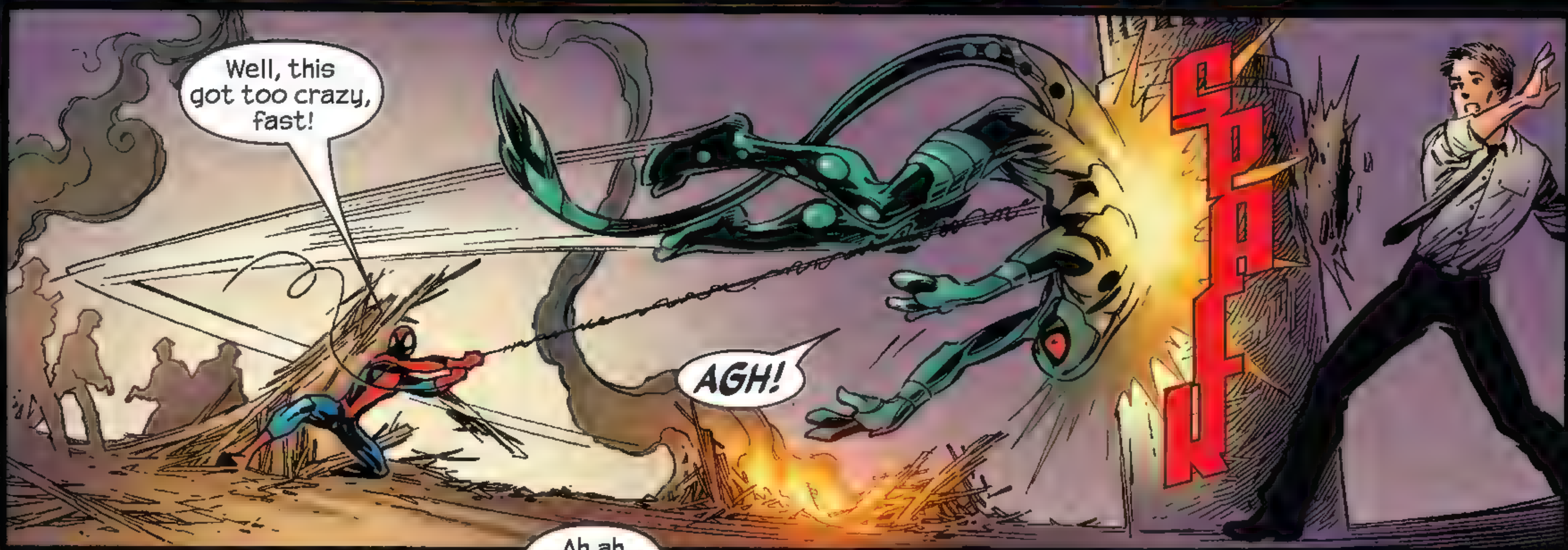
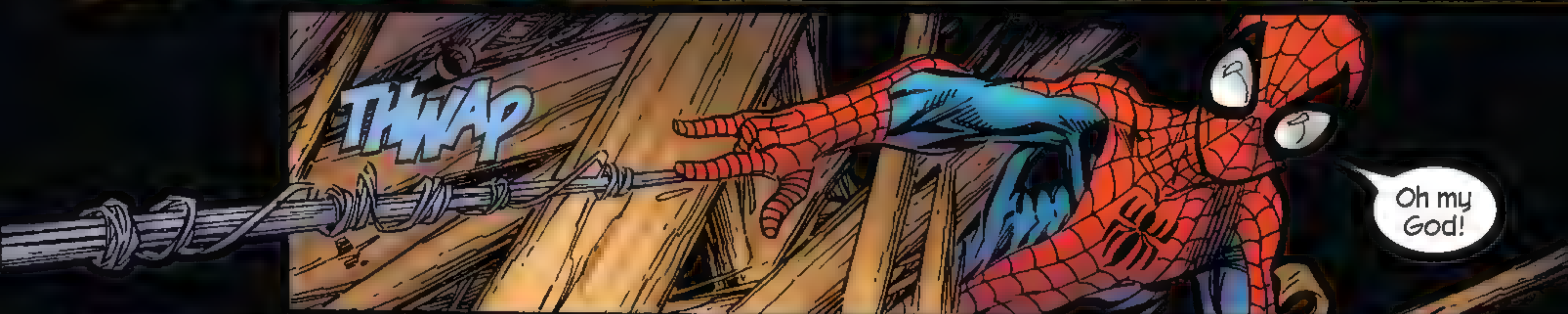


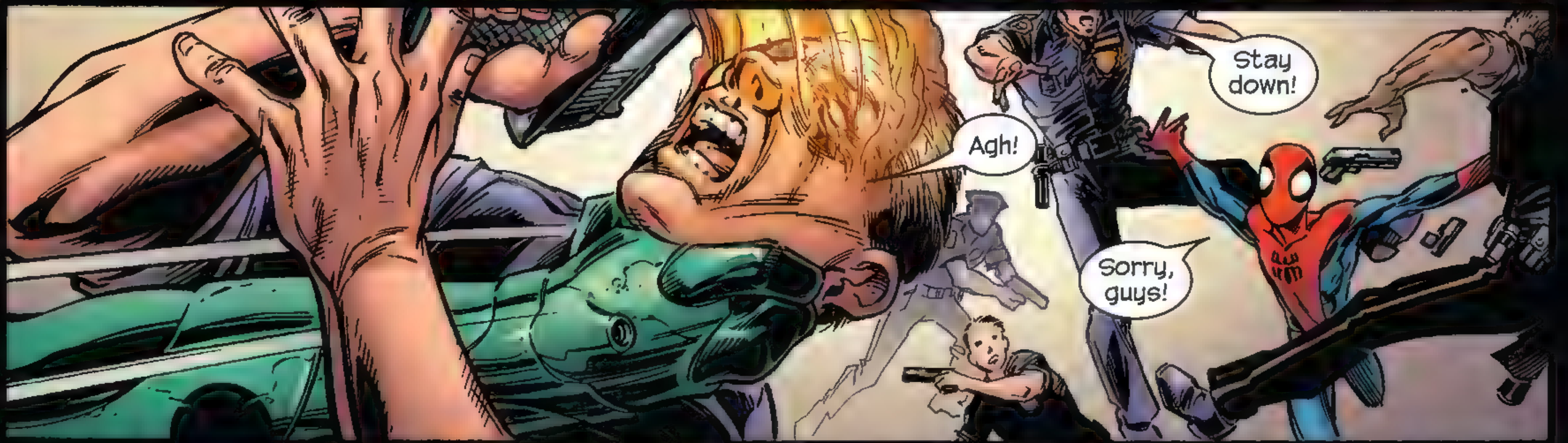


(Well, I guess I know what I'm doing for the rest of my afternoon...)



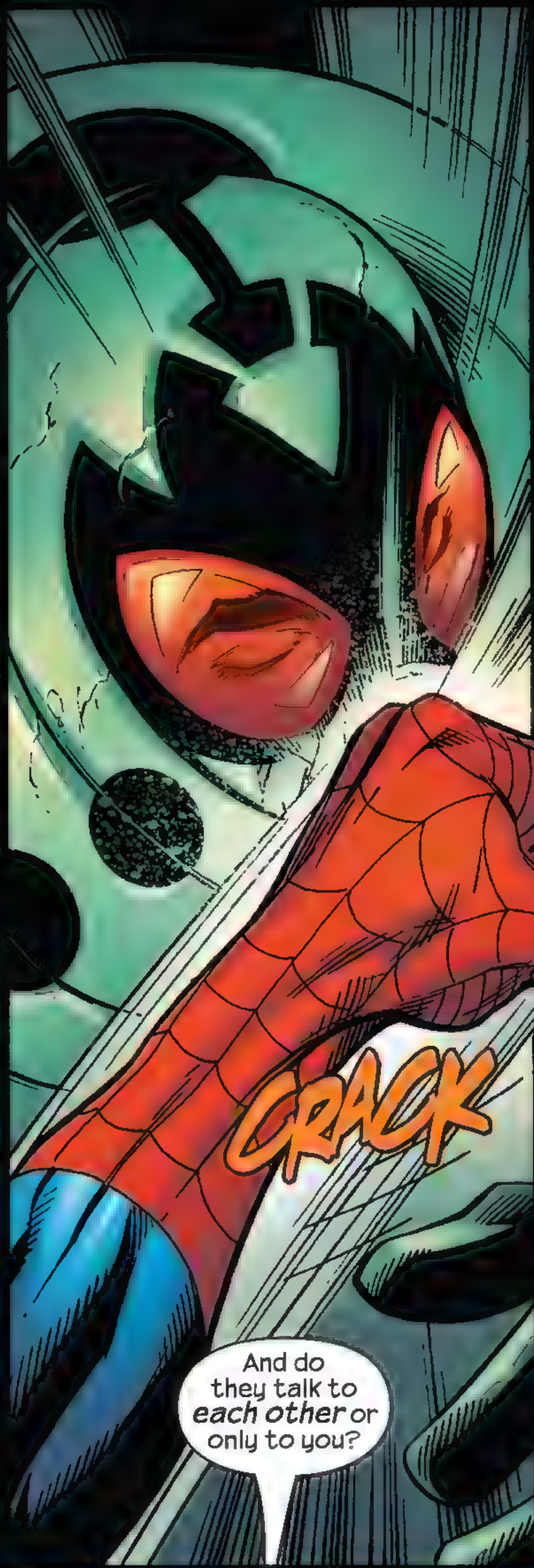












And do they talk to each other or only to you?



CRASH



CRACK

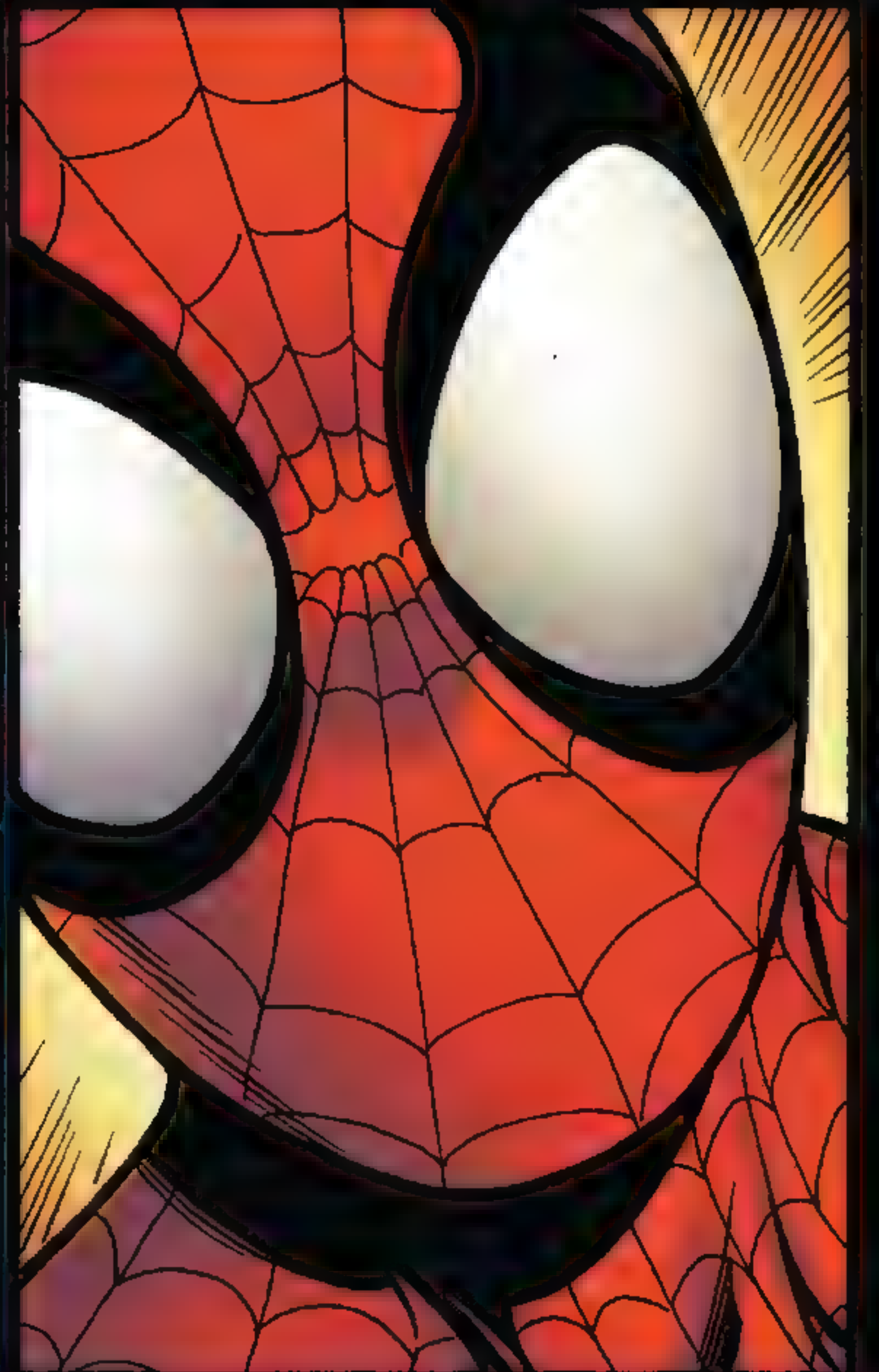


Now, please, I'm begging you, calm down or I'm going to have to--



No!! No!!! You have to listen!!

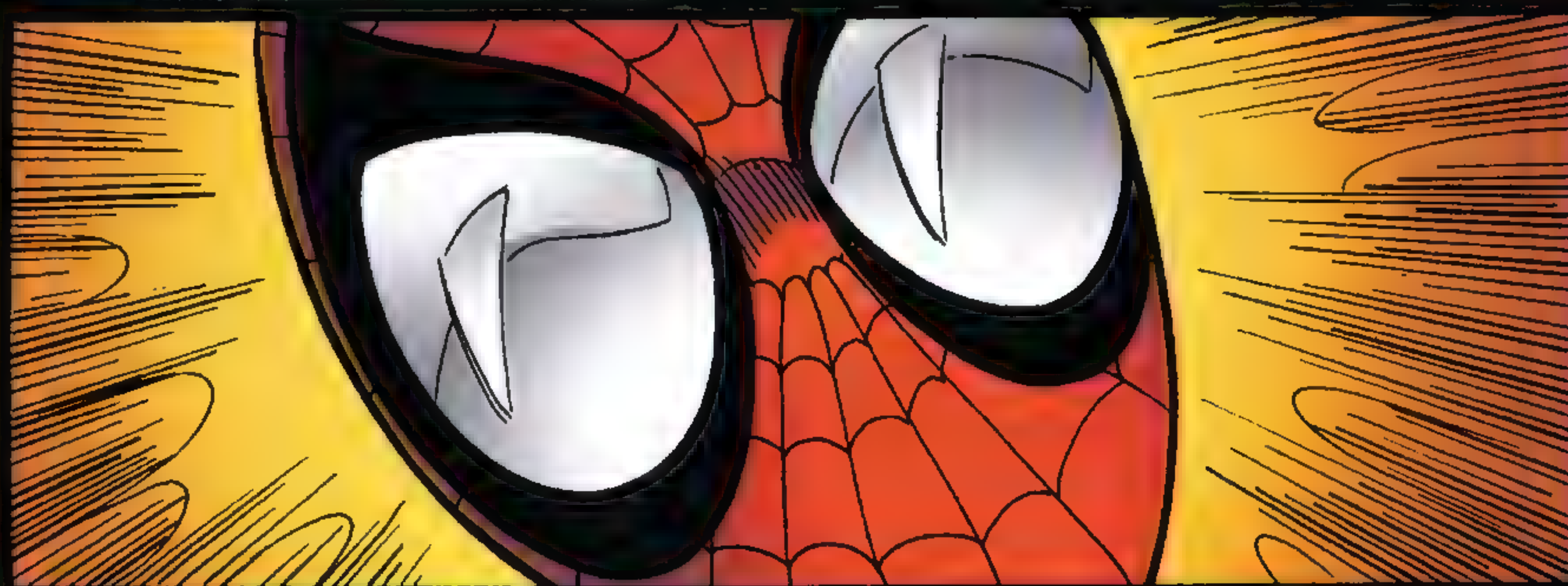
No, I gotta end this before anyone else gets--

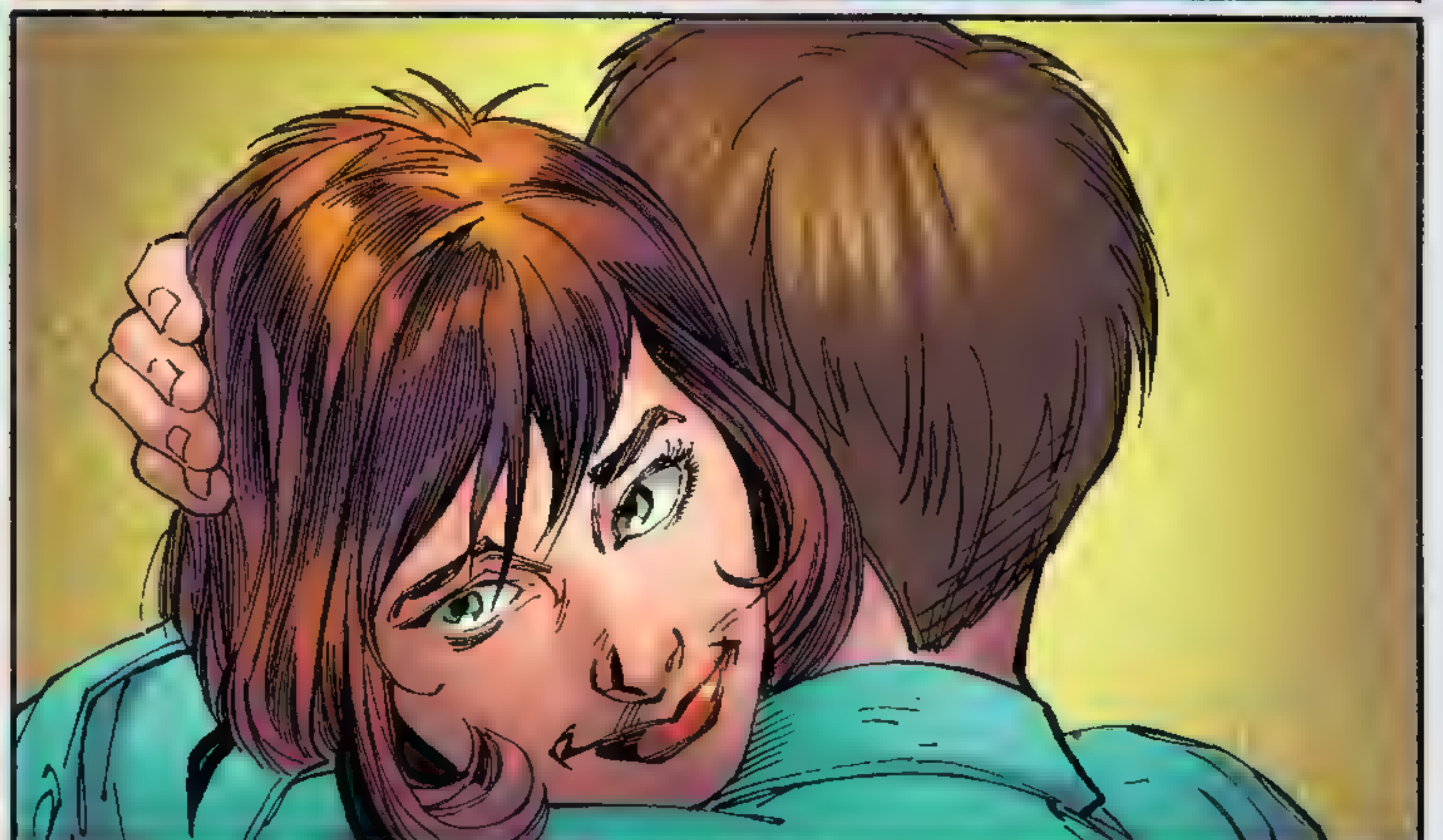
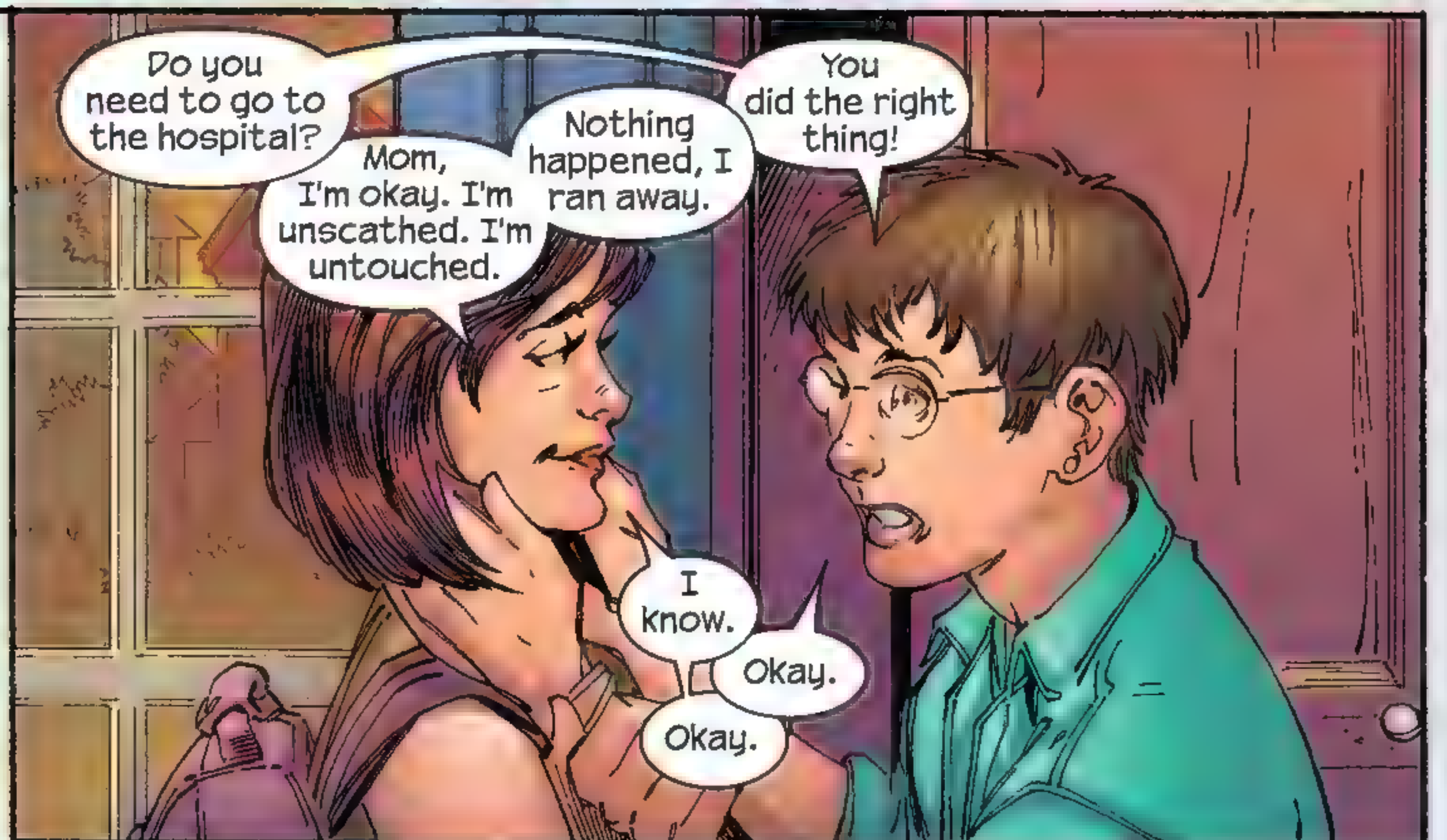
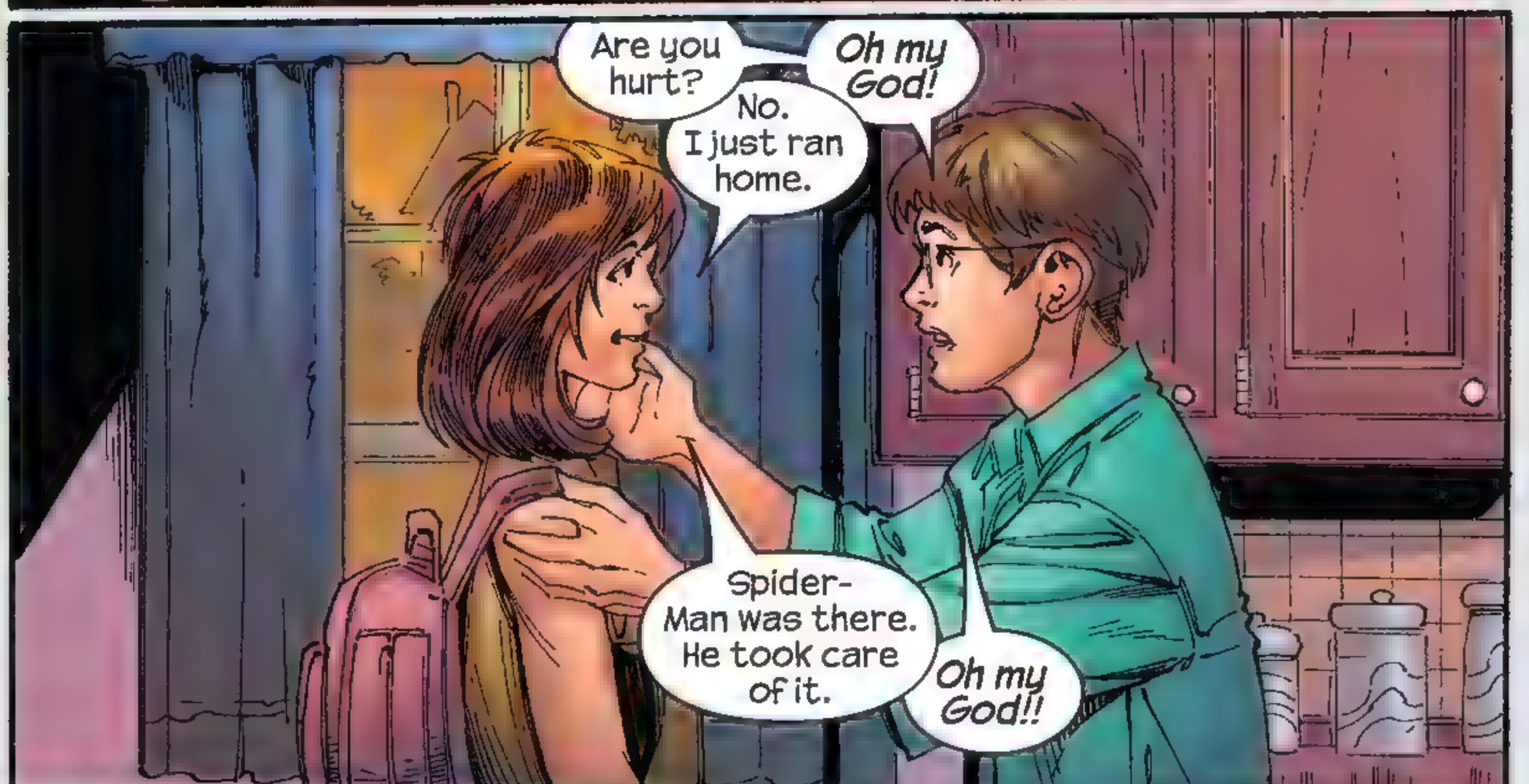
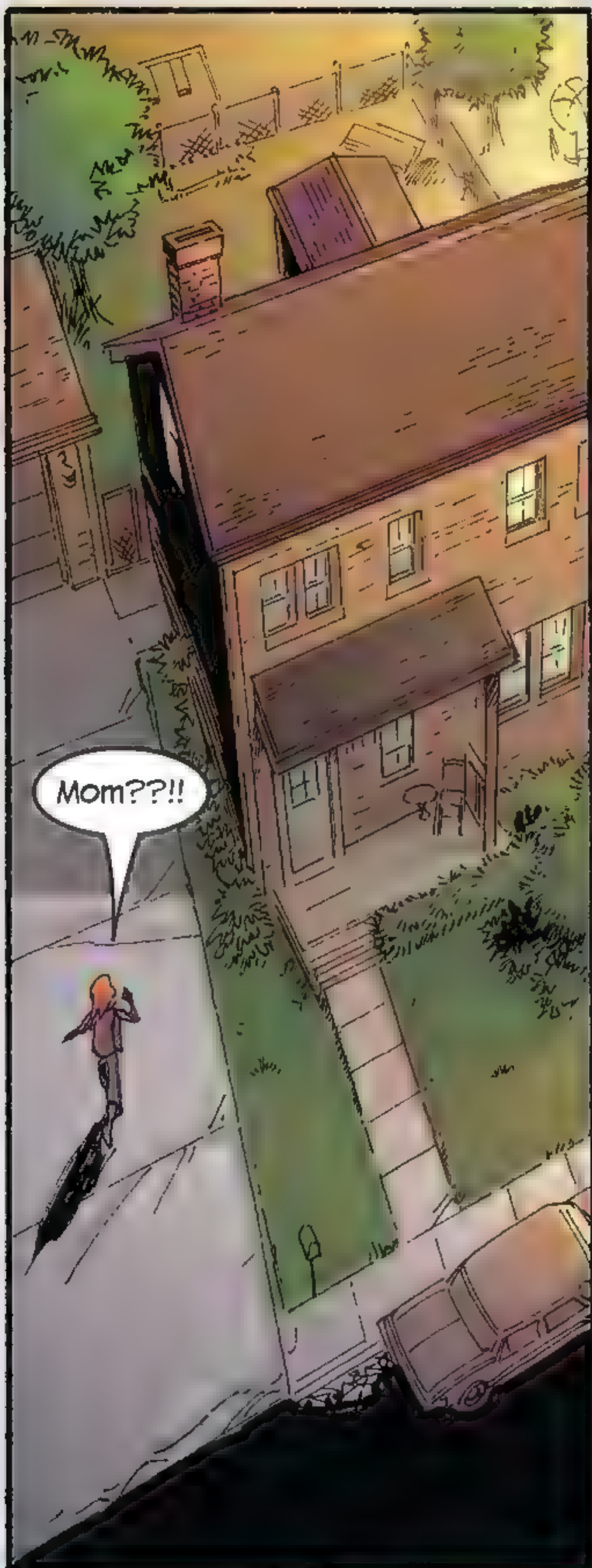


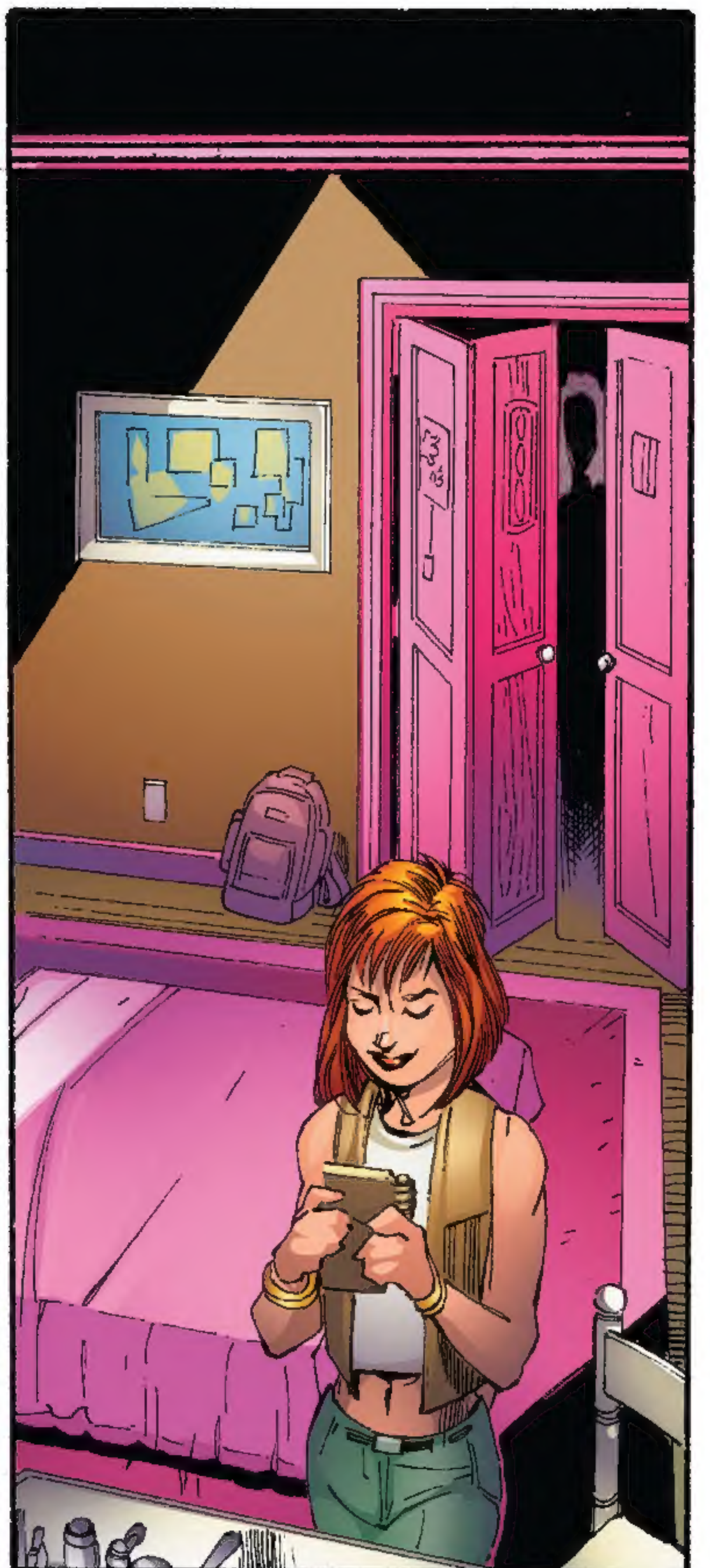
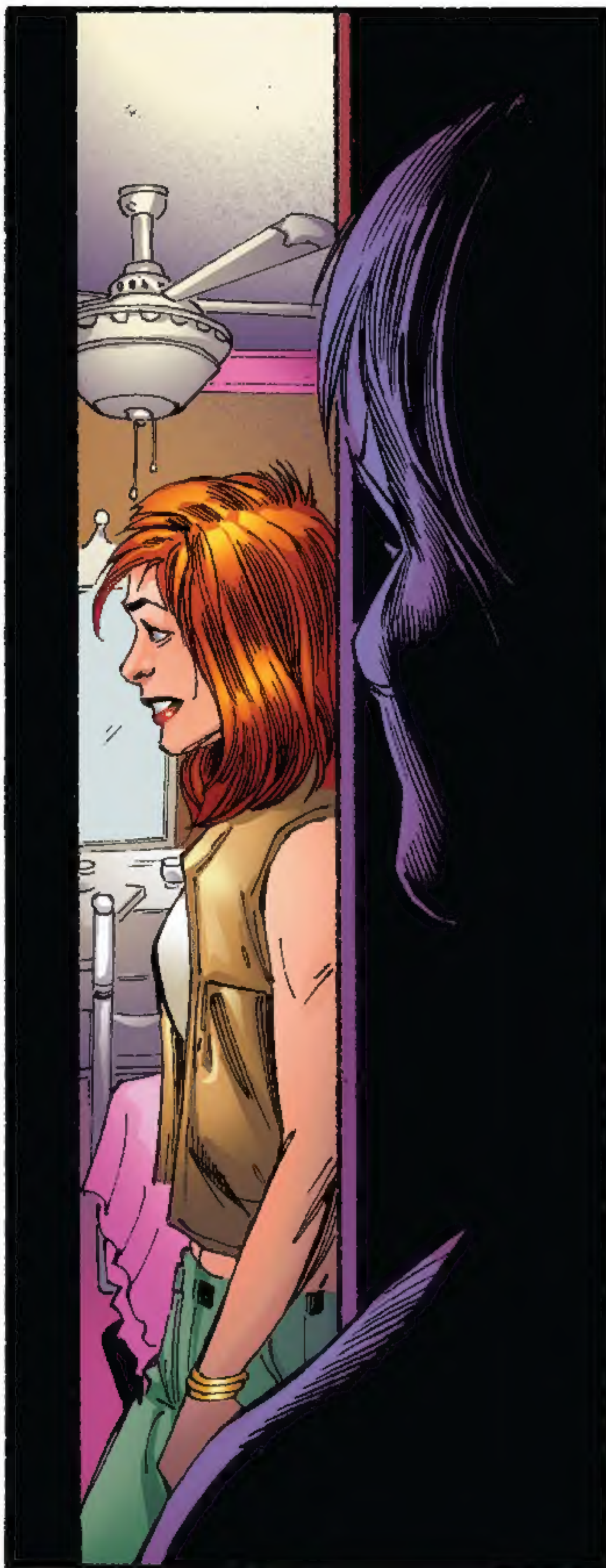


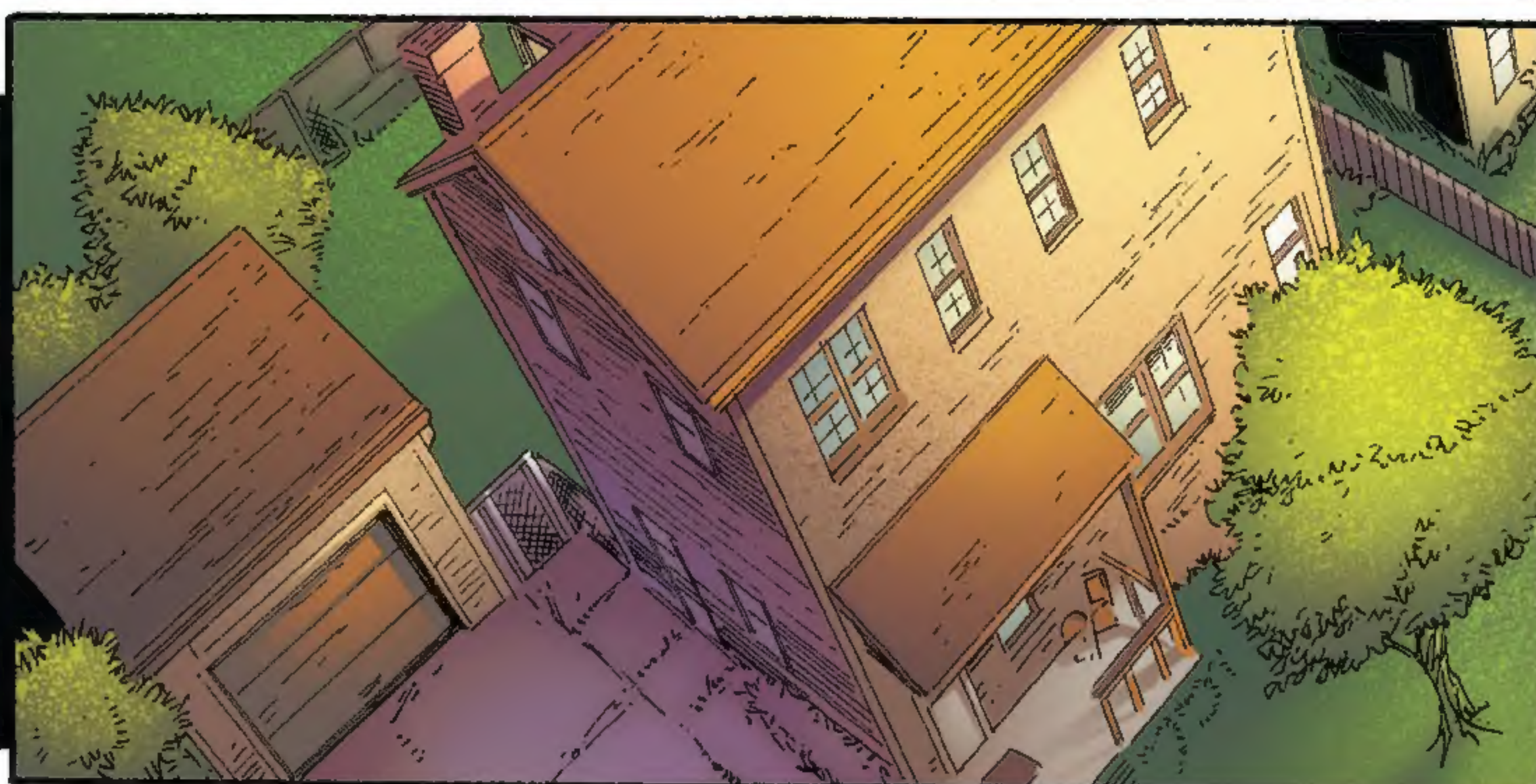
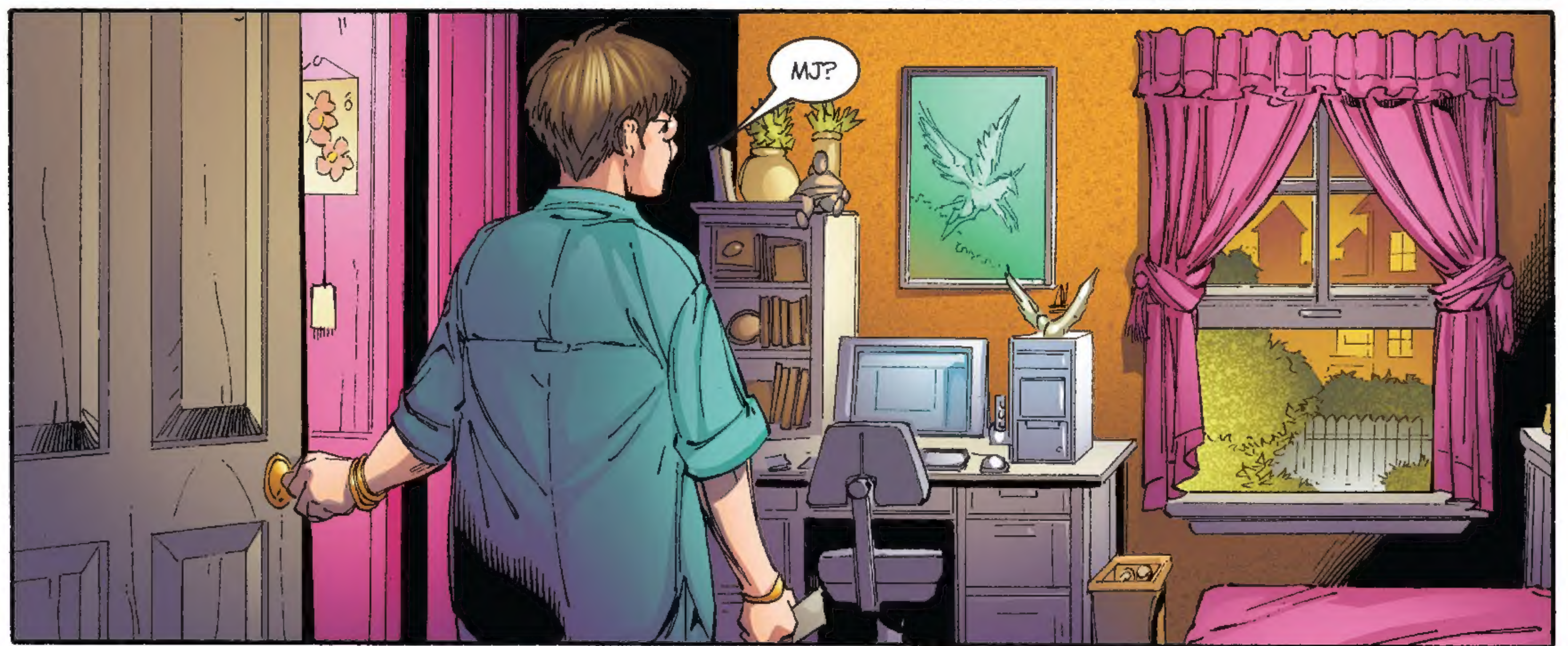
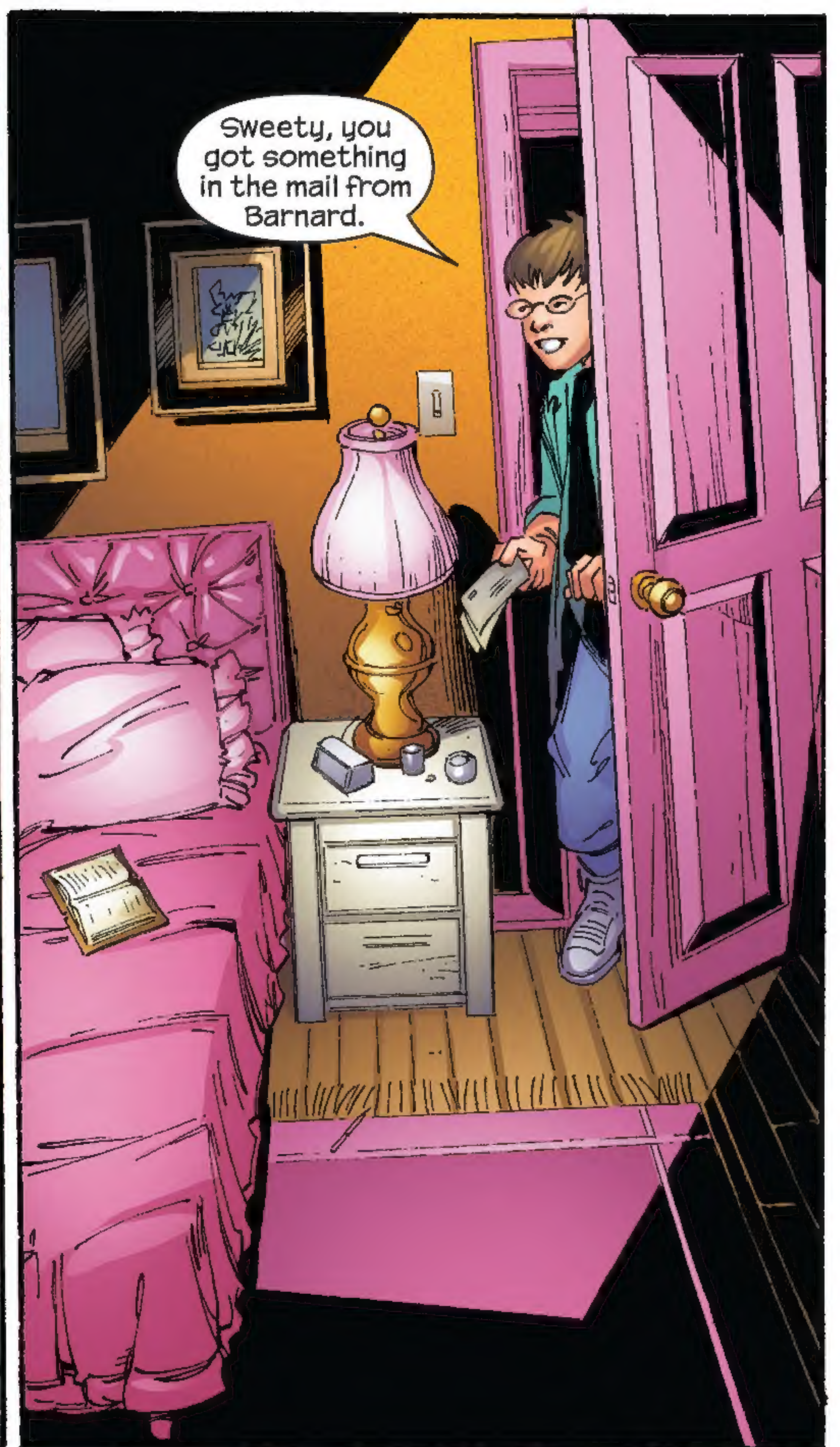
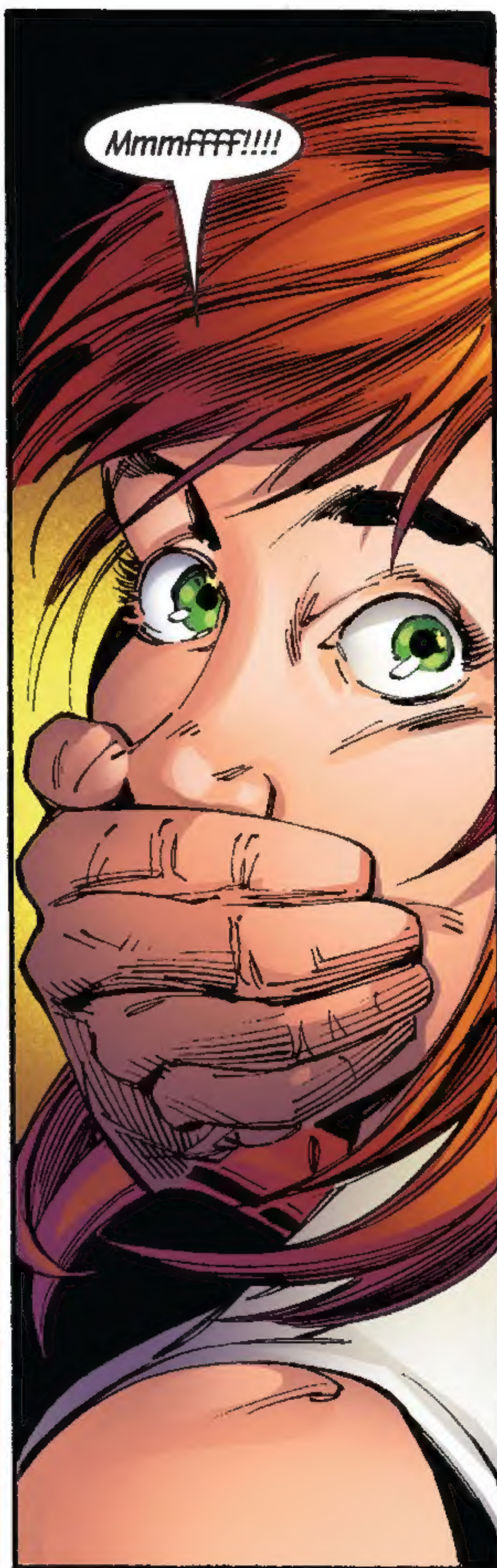
"Who are you, masked mystery man??? Unveil yourself to the crowd!!"

He *said* that...









To be continued...

ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN



Dear *Ultimate Spider-Man* team,

Never taken the time to write, but I'm probably one of your book's biggest fans.

At Wizardworld Los Angeles, I met Brian Michael Bendis in the Marvel booth for some signatures on a few books. I'm a heavily tattooed person... tattoos all of which are of Spider-Man and his rogues' gallery of villains. Mr. Bendis and the other celebs of the booth took a great interest in my body art, of which I told Brian that I had a rather nice back piece directly from the pages of his book *Ultimate Spider-Man*.

Upon this news, Mr. Bendis exclaimed, "Okay, now I've gotta see it." I removed my T-shirt and everyone in the immediate area seemed shocked at the extent of my artwork (a work still in progress, mind you).

In short, Brian Bendis was quite impressed with the tattoo, and asked if I could send him the photo of the two of us together in the Marvel booth. He claimed that he would very much like to get the picture into one of the future issues of USM... something for which I would be eternally grateful!!

So, attached is the photo taken that day.

A million thanks,
Jim Trelakes

P.S. I've been a heavy collector of the original Bagley/Thibert art boards from the early issues. I have a large collection from the first twenty issues, including the page that was used for my back piece.

Jim, you truly have devoted mind, soul, and obviously body to your love of *Ultimate Spider-Man*! I'm sure Brian and Mark are proud to be immortalized so colorfully on your human canvas!

Dear Ultimate Marvelites,

I must say that the whole Ultimate line is maybe the best idea in comics ever. Recently I came back to my senses and, after a five-year absence, re-started collecting—beginning with *Ultimate Spider-Man* issue 86. I began to collect the paperbacks, too, so I can read what I missed (silly me). I have a few questions regarding USM.

1. Will the Shocker get any respect, like, say, ever?
2. And a geeky observation question: In issue 94, page 8, Spidey is ambushed and hit in the back by a Reavers' blast. Does that mean that the spider-sense of this version is somehow less "sensitive" than the classic Marvel Spidey?

Thanks for the answers I know I'll get.

LF Garcia
Bogotá, Colombia

P.S. USM rocks!

LF, I think we both know the Shocker is never going to get any respect, like, say, ever. As for the Reavers and their blast, if you remember, Spidey already knew he was in danger—his sense probably just couldn't pinpoint which of the several weapons pointed at him would potentially fire at him. Good question!

Greetings, my friends,

I've been a fan of *Ultimate Spider-Man* and the whole Ultimate line since it first began. I've loved most of what Bendis has done with Spidey, but the reason I'm writing this is just so I can say this: the "Deadpool" arc sucked big time. I don't care about the re-imagining of Deadpool—I think that turned out okay. I also enjoyed the development of the Peter/Kitty relationship, but my main concern is that the arc has sooo many mistakes. Here are just a few...

1. Rogue. I don't know if this is Bendis or Bagley's mistake, but let me make this clear... *Ultimate Rogue does not fly nor does she have super-strength!!!!* In issue 92, I thought Angel had dropped her—but in 93 and 94, she is clearly flying!! And even beating the cyborg people with her own hands!! Come on, even with Gambit's powers, there's no way she could do that... it's surprising this happened; since Bendis was once the *Ultimate X-Men* writer, he should know better...

2. Storm is not an African goddess; she is a car thief...

3. Why didn't Kitty just phase through all the cyborgs at the very beginning? That would have saved Spider-Man and the X-Men a lot of trouble...

4. Where the heck was Iceman?? That is a goldmine of material related to the Iceman-Spidey-Kitty love triangle completely wasted. I was longing to see how Peter and Bobby would get along since Bobby is Kitty's ex.

5. Why does Angel have the uniform if he was just visiting? And wasn't he shot in a wing in issue 94, and then just flying as if nothing happened?

6. How can an X-Men battle that wasn't even filmed be on television?

7. How can Storm recognize the island when she wasn't even with the team at the time they went there?

8. How did Cyclops get free?

9. How can Spider-Man and Deadpool make expressions with their masks' eyes?

Just to mention a few... I expect better next time. Still, this is the only USM I have been so annoyed by, so I can forgive Bendis for that. Looking forward to "Morbis."

Toboe

Wheew! Okay, Toboe, you make some good points, so let's try to address them.

1. Er, maybe she was jumping from a tree? She certainly jumps quite high though, thanks to all that Danger Room experience.

2. I don't think Storm ever seriously referred to herself as a goddess...

3. Kitty started doing her phase thing when she realized it would work on the cyborgs—but at first, if you remember, she was quite freaked out.

4. Iceman was busy battling Reavers just outside of the panel borders for most of the arc and, frankly, he just wanted to avoid Spidey.

5. With regards to Warren's costume, it's not like all the X-Men were sitting around the Mansion in-costume—the Reavers dressed them up for maximum brand-recognition. And the blast wasn't severe—if you remember, Spidey got hit but he was up and running soon after.

6. Surveillance video—Mojo's got cameras on top of cameras all over the island.

7. All the X-Men are required to study all missions (like a football team)—this one happened to be televised, so it was especially easy to get caught up on.

8. Cyclops is the leader of the X-Men, and thus, we can assume, very resourceful.

9. Deadpool, as we learned, could morph his image; Spidey's mask... well, you'd have to ask Peter how that works...

Thanks for reading so closely and we hope you enjoyed "Morbis"!

NEXT



What's with MJ acting so nice all of a sudden? Are she and Peter headed for a reconciliation? But what about Kitty? More pressingly, who—or what—is the all-new Ultimate Spider-Woman!?! And don't stop reading before the last page... in part 2 of "The Clone Saga."

CLIFF BENSTON
SPECIAL THANKS

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